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THE MILLENNIAL REST;

OR,

THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

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THE

MILLENNIAL REST;

OR,

THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

BY

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LONDON:
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INTRODUCTION.

THE foundations of duty are laid in the past. Revelation is the record of all we owe to God, to man, and to ourselves. Motive, direction, and authority are there. But duty is not always easy: sometimes it is sacrifice. The love that inspires it occasionally falters, and the weary heart feels despondent. We are labourers in a dismantled vineyard, voyagers on a stormy sea, and travellers on a rugged, crooked, and storm-beaten road. Hope reads the prophecies and promises of that future, to the grandeur of which all past ages contribute, and in the glory of which they shall all be crowned, and imparts unto wavering faith and weary love those joyous and brilliant prospects which refresh the heart, and restore the strength, and give what in itself is victory—the assurance of a near and glorious success. Faith brings stores from the past, and Hope brings sunshine from the future, and both pour their contributions into the arduous, the troubled, and perplexing present. It was because Moses "had respect to the recompense of reward" that he was able to "esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Abraham was sustained in life's struggles because "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." So it is written of that white-robed and glorified company: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but

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having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," "seeking a country, a better country, that is a heavenly one."

Despair is the evening twilight that settles in eternal night. Hope is the morning twilight that expands into everlasting day.

We find the toiling and struggling men of the world fleeing to the novel or romance in order that, lifted out of the oppressive present on the wings of fancy, they may enjoy a transient respite and refreshment. Human nature would die of exhaustion were its back always bowed down. It must turn aside occasionally, if only to gather a wayside flower, or dream of summer, or draw on the picturesque creations of genius for thoughts that lift it above the earth and waft it away to brighter and more ethereal realms. Prophecy has all the interest of the most brilliant romance, with nothing of its emptiness; all the charm of the highest poetry, all the beauty of the noblest painting, and all the reality of truth and fact. It is God's way of lightening the load of care, glorifying the present and gladdening the heart. Christianity, the religion of faith, and love, and hope, is the religion of happiness. It alone presents an axis of rest to the drifting masses of mankind; it imparts a hope "that maketh not ashamed;" it alone brings down into the cold heart the warmth of heaven. It is the temptation of man to borrow for to-day the troubles of to-morrow, and to carry over to to-morrow the duties of to-day, thus setting aside the business that belongs to him, and trading on capital that does not. It is the teaching of heaven to draw from the morrow its sunshine, not to supplant, but to sustain the duties of to-day. That blessed morrow, thank God! comes nearer

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every day. No Christian would wish to adjourn it were it possible.

Nor are any of its thoughtful inhabitants so perfectly satisfied with the world as it is that they do not desire to see that transfiguration of heaven and earth, which will have more than the splendour, and nothing of the transience of Tabor.

Our earth is a grand ruin, for which, however, there is reserved a glorious restoration; but that restoration will be accomplished by Him that made it, and not by the consummation of any process now going on. The Creator will appear as the Restorer; the great High Priest will come forth from the Holy of Holies, as Aaron came out from the "holy place made with hands," and will pronounce that Divine benediction which will descend into the depths of the earth, and rise to the heights of the heavens, and spread as the waves of an illuminated sea, extinguishing the primeval curse, and causing every wilderness it touches to rejoice, and the solitary places of the world to blossom as the rose.

Every Christian believes in the advent of a day of rest and restoration. Every one who accepts the Bible as the inspired revelation of the mind of God looks for the Millennium. The only existing difference of opinion refers to the nature of it and the means by which it is to be introduced. Dean Alford, in his Critical Greek Testament, Vol. iv., Part 2, observes that there is a division of opinion "whether the expected second advent is to be regarded as preceding or succeeding the thousand years' reign or Millennium. The majority, both in number and in learning and research, adopt the pre-millennial advent, following, as it seems to me, the plain and undeniable sense of the sacred text of the book itself." "On one point," remarks Dean Alford,

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"I have ventured to speak strongly, because my conviction on it is strong, founded on the rules of fair and consistent interpretation; I mean, the necessity of accepting literally the first resurrection and the millennial reign." "That the Lord will come in person to this earth; that his risen elect will reign here with him and judge; that during that blessed reign the power of evil will be bound, and the glorious prophecies of peace and truth on earth find their accomplishment—this is my firm persuasion, and not mine alone, but that of multitudes of Christ's waiting people, as it was that of his primitive apostolic church, before controversy blinded the eyes of the fathers to the light of prophecy."

The Dean also remarks, in his notes on the last chapters of the Apocalypse: "This eternal kingdom is situated on the purified and renewed earth, become the blessed habitation of God with his glorified people. Though not here stated on the surface, it is evident that the method of renewal is that described in 2 Pet. iii. 10, namely, a renovation by fire."

I have illustrated and unfolded those portions of the Old Testament prophets which, like the prophecy on the Mount of Olives, bear on and delineate this blessed era, and have endeavoured to present to the reader a faithful, clear, and most comforting hope of the world as it will be.

In my first volume, "The Great Tribulation," I endeavoured to describe what St. John calls ἡ θλῖψις ἡ μεγαλη, "the tribulation the great," through which we must pass, and on which the world has already entered.

In my second volume, "Redemption Draweth Nigh," I collected the various signs and earnests of the glory to be revealed "at that day."

In this volume, which concludes and completes the

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series, I have laboured to set forth that nearing blessedness, that bridal of heaven and earth, the consummation of a long betrothal—that sunshine which once bathed all Eden—and interrupted, clouded, and refracted for six thousand years, will break—the sooner the better—on our earth, and perfect a world that will never fade, and cover it with a glory that will never die.

That they who scoff may be brought to a better mind, and they that joyfully hold fast the blessed hope may both meet with me in that "world as it will be," is my earnest and sincere prayer.

March, 1862.

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THE MILLENNIAL REST;

OR,

THE WORLD AS IT WILL BE.

LECTURE I.

THE SEVEN GRAND DISPENSATIONS.

GOD gives his people notice of each successive stage of that grand work in which he has been engaged from the beginning.

"*For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.*"—ISAIAH lxv. 17.

THE new heavens and the new earth succeed the great conflagration described by Peter, where he says, "the heavens and the earth that now are shall be burnt up, and all the elements shall melt with fervent heat." It is therefore the reconsecration and reconstitution of that visible and material economy which is around us now; so truly so that Christians look forward justly to this very earth as destined to be the loveliest porch of heaven, the most beautiful island on the bosom of the infinite main; on which shall dwell righteousness, no more in patches, but everywhere, and over which shall shine the glory that dwelt between the cherubim, and out of which shall be eliminated all the elements of sin, and sorrow, and evil; as these were sown broadcast by Satan, and have grown up into bitter and disastrous harvests in every age and on every acre of the earth. After

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this conflagration we read that there shall be a new heavens and a new earth.

During the last six thousand years—nearly exhausted—of the history of our globe, there have been at least six distinct and independent dispensations, to be succeeded by a seventh, the glory and the perfection of all that have passed away. Just as there seem to have been six days spent in the creation of the globe, or rather in the arrangement of it, crowned by a seventh, its coronal and its glory; so there seem to have been six successive dispensations or economies, each closing with judgment, and each giving birth to another, a brighter and a better. It is according to the very same analogy that students of prophecy have argued that the six days consumed in the arrangement of the world are the types of the six thousand years that mete out the time during which this economy is to last, and that the seventh day in which the six of creation culminated is the type of the thousand years commonly known by the name of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, or the millennial age, which ends and crowns the world that now is.

Let us enumerate these six different dispensations, each ending in specific judgments. First, there was the Adamitic age, the age of Adam and Eve in Paradise, in which God's voice was heard at early morn and at dewy eve, and his footprints were visible upon every portion of the garden of Eden; all flowers beauty, all sounds music, all air perfume, and all sensations bliss; the two hearts that beat there happy beyond the reach of all disturbing or intrusive element. Adam and Eve sinned, and then the age ended in retribution. They were expelled from Paradise, and the fiery cherubim guarded the gates of glory, lest the unfit criminals and exiles should seek to enter again into that holy and happy abode. Secondly, we have the antediluvian, patriarchal age, marked by the martyrdom of Abel, the crimes of Cain, and terminating also in judgment, when God opened the fountains of the great deep, withdrew their shutters from the windows of heaven, and let forth a depopulating and dismantling flood that baptized the

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earth with its judicial waters, and left eight persons only to go down from Ararat to look forth upon a world dismantled and depopulated, and to begin the long and the weary march of life in an economy greatly deteriorated. Thirdly, we have the Noachian, if I may use the expression, dispensation, starting from the ark and the mountains of Ararat, under the beautiful symbol and shadow of the rainbow, light and darkness; the age too strongly branded by unbelief and impiety and idolatry, till at last this age also ended in the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the plain, and the institution of another and a new covenant, which took place as the fourth dispensation. This we may call the Abrahamic dispensation, when God appeared to the father of the faithful, teaching, covenanting, and making bright promises; an age intensely interesting in its story, like life's April day, full of sunshine and of showers, of lights and of shadows. But it also ended in judgments upon Egypt, and the overthrow of Pharaoh in the Red Sea, and the exodus of the Israelites toward the promised and the better land. Fifthly, we have the Mosaic economy, beginning at the Red Sea, constituted and consecrated again by the appearance of Deity; characterised by the weary march through the desert, by the possession of the promised land, pledged to them as long as they were faithful to their covenant; ending at last in the overthrow of that beautiful city Jerusalem, the beauty and the joy of the whole earth; in which God dwelt between the cherubim; in which now the Mosque of Omar raises its crescent to the sky, while on the Holy Land the Druse, and the Moslem, and the monk leave their desolating footprints; from its shores the people that have a right to it are exiles, until God lifts the standard in the sky, and bids Israel come forth, and return, and again dwell in Palestine. After this dispensation comes the sixth, in which we now live; a dispensation beginning with God manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, justified in the Spirit, believed on in the world, received up into glory; a dispensation whose characteristic feature is not the conversion of the whole

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world, which will not be accomplished in it, but the election and conversion of a people out of the world, to be presented unto him a glorious church, without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. Whilst it is our most sacred and our most instant duty to carry the Gospel to every creature upon earth, and the shorter the time that remains the more instant and urgent ought our efforts to be; yet it is evident that the Gospel of the kingdom preached in this economy will not issue in the conversion of all the inhabitants of the earth. We are expressly told: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached among all nations for a *witness*, and then shall the end come;" and we read that when our Lord comes, instead of all being righteous, there shall be great sin and great wickedness in the world. See St. Paul's characteristics of the last times. One of the marked and expressive signs of the approach of that age is the fulfilment of the second chapter of Joel. That chapter is probably now being partially fulfilled. The day of Pentecost, that passed away 1800 years ago, was the first sprinkling drops of the shower. But God is now pouring out his Spirit upon all flesh in greater abundance. And as if to show that we occupy the evening hours of this last sixth dispensation, let us notice at this moment the instancy, and the urgency, and the frequency and the force with which the Gospel is being preached; in theatres, in halls, at prayer-meetings held in barns, and in drawing-rooms, by men who have great talent, with great roughness, but real piety, calling men with a voice of thunder to prepare to meet God, and provoking echoes in the most obdurate hearts. These things must strike the most thoughtless and the most unreflecting, indicating as they do the era in the age, the sixth age or dispensation, in which it is our lot now to live. The seventh age or dispensation comes, called the millennial rest. In this millennial day all shall be righteous; every tear shall be wiped from every eye; God alone shall be exalted; Jerusalem shall be lifted up to the top of the mountains, and all nations shall come to it; Satan shall be bound for a thousand years; the wolf shall lie down

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with the lamb, and the little child shall lead them. But this dispensation, so marvellous, like the preceding six is to end in judgment; for we read that at the close of the millennial economy, after the thousand years have been finished, Satan is to be let loose for a little; and then occurs the perplexing statement, beset with great difficulties, to the effect that some nations in the four quarters of the globe are to come up and compass the camp of the saints of the Most High, headed by Satan; as if it were Satan's last desperate muster, on which he stakes his eternal condition of ruin or victory; but we read that he is taken, and cast into the lake that burneth with fire, and death and hell are cast into it too; and the millennial age melts into the heavenly, as the sweet dawn melts into the noonday sunshine, never to be clouded nor to be interrupted for ever. I have thus given the history of the past in these six economies, of which we have either experience or history. Of the seventh, the experience or the history remains still to be realised.

The mark of this seventh economy, which is introduced at the 17th verse of this chapter, to which Peter refers in the 3rd chapter of his Second Epistle, is a new heaven and new earth, "wherein dwelleth righteousness." What a distinguishing feature is this, not wherein dwelleth law, which is not always righteousness, but "wherein dwelleth righteousness;" when every heart shall be love, every intellect shall be light, every conscience shall be peace, and all blessings break upon the shores of hearts that have been crushed, like summer waves upon the sands from a peaceful sea, chiming in songs of gratitude unbroken and undisturbed for ever and ever! In that blessed state wherein dwelleth righteousness there shall be no more misunderstanding and misinterpretation of each other. The worst wars that have convulsed the earth, and scourged the nations, have arisen from misunderstanding. There shall there be no uncharitableness to desire to misinterpret; there will be no shadow of ill-will upon a single brow; there shall be no ripple of ill-feeling rushing

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through the channels of a single heart; they shall all be righteous, saith the Lord. There shall be no ignorance in that day to lead to misapprehensions. We now see through a glass darkly. I believe if two people that heartily hate each other—and such phenomena do occur—were to see each other as they are, they would shake hands and embrace each other, and marvel at the misunderstanding that had led to their discords, their divisions, and disputes. It is by seeing bits of each other that we misinterpret each other; and it is by putting hasty constructions upon each other's words, and deeds, and features, and manner, that we come often to uncharitable and unrighteous inferences respecting each other. In that blessed state there shall be no crime to stain the calendars of the world or to vex the souls of the people of God. Each heart shall be the holy chancel in which God dwells; each spirit shall be the seat of the very shechinah, and be consecrated as the holy of holies itself. Whatever taint sin has left, whatever trail it has spread upon the earth, whatever seeds of evil it has sown, whatever bitter fruits it has given birth to, shall all be swept away from that divine economy in which dwelleth righteousness. In it there shall be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor crying; all former things shall have passed away. Every word shall be true, every feeling shall be just, every affection love, every act shall be righteous, as measured by the standard of heaven; every thought shall be pure, as weighed in the sanctuary of the Eternal; righteousness shall dwell in every heart, its illumination; in every affection, its warmth; in every imagination, its inspiration; in every word, its music; in every deed, its colouring, its fragrance, and its glory; the whole soul, body, and spirit shall be inlaid with the exquisite and imperishable mosaic of righteousness, and love, and peace, and joy; and no tides of change or streams of trouble shall pass one ripple or cast one shadow over that brilliant and beautiful economy in which dwelleth righteousness. And mark the force of the expression, "*dwelleth* righteousness." Here it has been an incidental and a

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transient visitant, like angel visits, few and far between; but then righteousness shall no longer be a visitor to our world, whom we entertain as a stranger unawares, but a permanent inhabitant; for it is said, "In which *dwelleth* righteousness." The earth will be purified; righteousness will rest upon it like a glory cloud, and be reflected from its every rock, and stream, and tower, and fruit, and flower, like sweet and cloudless sunshine. Righteousness shall dwell in it. Such is the promise of God by Isaiah.

We have reason to believe that this righteousness will dwell in a material orb, with material glories, among men living in the flesh, raised from the dead; or of the living changed, recognising each other, and holding communion and fellowship with each other; and only out of this earth shall be ejected what Satan succeeded in introducing, but nothing that God made shall be destroyed; it shall be purified, consecrated, and hallowed. Sin, the blot that has defaced it, the interpolation that has disturbed it, shall pass away for ever and ever. Sin crept into heaven with the angels; it penetrated into Paradise with Satan; it is in this economy in the air, in the earth, in the ocean; a guest at our tables, a companion in our journeys, a tenant in our hearts, a blot upon our memories, an intruder and a disturber in our consciences. Sin at this moment is a shadow in the sanctuary, an interruption in our holiest prayers, a discord in our sweetest songs, a worm in the fairest and the most fragrant flower; it creeps into our charity, and turns it into vain-glory; it penetrates our worship, and makes it hypocrisy; it touches our faith, and it becomes presumption; it mingles with our repentance, and makes it despair; it vitiates our noblest deeds, like the fly, the dead fly, in the apothecary's ointment, and makes them sinful and polluted in the sight of a holy God. In this dispensation sin enters the eye of one, as in the case of David; it nestles in the hand of another, as a bribe in Gehazi; it settles on the tongue of a third, as in the case of Ananias; it was the life of the treachery of Judas; it was the core of the denial of Peter; it

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originated the doubts of Thomas; it is in every disease that racks the body; in every pestilence that rides upon the air; in every hurricane that dismantles the earth; in every earthquake that convulses it. We have in all these the outward blots, and blains, and boils, into which sin breaks out everywhere, till poor afflicted nature groans and travails in pain, and yearns, and longs, and seeks to be delivered. What is wanted is not this earth swept away, but purified and cleansed. Let the voice that once said in majestic tones, "Let there be light," and there was light, only pronounce the words, Let there be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; and this earth of ours will have its tears dried up, its groans stilled, its yearnings gratified; and those bleak wildernesses shall rejoice, and those desert places shall blossom like the rose; and our world, the fairest and the loveliest orb in the universe, will in consequence of its marvellous story awaken the deepest interest, and concentrate on itself the intensest regards of all the orbs in the universe of God. No orb is there in the starry hosts of the sky on which a cross has been raised; no city in Jupiter, or Saturn, or Mars, or Venus, or any of the planets belonging to our system, in which there is a grave in which God manifest in the flesh once lay; in no other orb has there been a Pentecost. The antecedents of our globe are the most brilliant; the historic traditions of our world are the most thrilling; and it seems to me as if it would be an awful catastrophe if a world with such antecedents, such a history, covered with so magnificent footprints, should ever be expunged or annihilated, or disappear from the orbs and records of the universe. But we know it will not. Its sin will be eliminated, and it will be reconsecrated by the footstep of its present Lord; it will be beautiful again, and so beautiful that the former heavens and earth shall not come into remembrance; the joy of its inhabitants shall make them forget their former sorrow. The sailor forgets the storm after he enjoys the peacefulness of the desired haven; the soldier forgets the roar, and the scenes, and the awful tragedies of war, after he

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has settled down in his native and peaceful hamlet; the traveller forgets the flints, and thorns, and winds, and rains of the long, rough, weary road, when he has reached his happy home; and the mother forgets her sorrow for joy that a man child is born into the world; and we shall forget the griefs of the present in the intense, untiring, uninterrupted enjoyment of that magnificent future in which the present shall be crowned and culminate.

This new heaven and new earth are meant for a people that have new hearts, and to whom all things are made new. The future rest, with all its blessedness, is a prepared place for a prepared people; "which things," it is said, "he has laid up for them that love him." Do we love the Saviour? or are our hearts so numbed by the cold of this present miserable age that they are never thawed and warmed by the love of Christ, and the hopes of the brighter and the better rest that is to come? Can we say from the very heart, "Whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unutterable and full of glory?" Can we say from the very heart, "Lord Jesus, thou knowest all things, and thou knowest this one thing: however insignificant I am, however poor in this world's estimation, thou knowest that I love thee?" Can you say even now, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" You have relatives there; some of you have a father there, some of you a mother, some of you a sister, some a brother, some a husband, some a wife; but though you love them, and desire to meet them again, and you will meet them again, can you cease to see them in the greater splendour of Him who is the glory and the burden of their songs? and can you say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" And can you add, too, in this world—looking at your wealth, your profits, your pleasures, estimating your home, gauging the happiness and appreciating the joys that nestle like swallows under its roof-tree—can you say, "And there is none upon earth that I desire beside or above thee?" If so, you need not fear; you will be a

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tenant of that new heaven and that new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. "Unto them that look for him will he come the second time unto salvation." Let us then fill the present with the privileges it offers; with the duties God demands, and God will crown it with the promises he has made, and with the new heaven and the new earth he keeps in reserve for all them that love him.

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LECTURE II.

LIGHTS AND SHADOWS.

It would be strange if in the prophecies of the Millennial Rest there were no "things hard to be understood." The history of the future in the Apocalypse is of course not so plain as that of the past of Genesis. Yet there are difficulties in the latter. We may therefore expect more in the former.

"*But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.*"—Isaiah lxv. 18-20.

The first question we must try to answer is this: Does this photographic portrait represent something in the age to come? Is it the delineation of the phenomena peculiar to it? or is it the portrait of something that will transpire before those great changes indicated in other portions of the Word of God will arrive? In other words, does it belong to the period spoken of in Revelation xx. in these words: "They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years;" or does it belong to an epoch long antecedent to this? It does seem to be the duty of the minister of Christ not to shrink from trying to explain, even if he should fail, every portion of the Word of God that comes before him in due course. What respect would you have for one whose duty it is to labour

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during the week in order to edify his flock on the Sunday, if he constantly repeated, what indeed are worth repeating, the precious and vital truths of evangelical Christianity, but as often as he came to a passage that needed research for illustration, or on which good men differ, were to say, I am too busy, or I am too idle, to examine and expiscate the meaning of this portion of the Word of God, and therefore I will skip it, and leave you to make of that passage what in your own judgments, ignorance, or mistakes you may? The more difficult a passage is the more dutiful it is to try to explain it. There are passages in this book which we cannot explain. Being a revelation of the Infinite, an apocalypse of the incomprehensible God, we must expect to meet in it touches of light too brilliant for the intellect to endure, too magnificent for imagination in its highest soarings to reach, and to bring down within the horizon of the very highest minds. We must not, therefore, be surprised if passages occur on which we may throw a little light, but on which we cannot throw full light, or rather on which we cannot give complete satisfaction. Persons must not think it inconsistent if the minister of Christ, where he is sure, speaks with the absolute dogmatism of an oracle; but where he is not sure, tells you so; and where he is utterly unable, admits at once the depth of the mysteries of heaven, and the feebleness of the human intellect.

In trying to cast light upon this passage, we have to answer the inquiry, Is it the picture of the millennial rest? Is it a scene that transpires subsequent to the conflagration of the earth, and the restoration of all things? I believe it unquestionably to be so. For you observe Isaiah begins, or rather God speaks by Isaiah in these words, in the 17th verse: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." You turn to Peter in his Second Epistle, and he quotes this as a promise soon to be fulfilled. He says: "The heavens and the earth which are now, being stored with fire, are reserved against the judgment of ungodly men. Nevertheless we, according to his promise;" what promise? There

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is no other promise of this kind in the Bible but the 17th verse of the 65th of Isaiah: "we according to his promise look for a new heaven;" not another heaven, but "a new heaven;" not another earth, but "a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." It is therefore plain that the picture contained in the 65th of Isaiah is a picture of an economy subsequent to the conflagration of the globe, and the return of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is also perfectly parallel with the picture in the 21st of Revelation: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth"—the very same words—"for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." But the difficulty meets us on the threshold, how is it possible to reconcile the assumption that the 65th chapter of Isaiah, at the 17th verse, describes the regeneration of the heavens and the earth, and is parallel with 2 Peter iii., and with Revelation xxi., and yet that there should be in this picture, subsequent to this restoration of all things, the strange and startling words: "For the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed?" In the Book of Revelation it is distinctly declared, "there shall be no more tears, nor crying, nor death." In this very chapter, at the 19th verse, we also read: "the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." But if infants die; if sods are broken for the dead; there must be, if human sympathy and affection survive the last change, tears, and crying, and sorrow. Here is a difficulty that has perplexed some of the best and wisest interpreters of

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prophecy. I will collate in this and the next lecture many of the judgments of the most eminent divines, and give perhaps less what is my own judgment, and more what are the opinions of some of the most gifted writers upon the subject. In the mean time, let me mention the different translations, or rather amendments of translation, which have been proposed upon this very difficult verse: "The child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." The first is by Procopius, who thus explains or paraphrases it: "All those who attain to that resurrection;" for the resurrection of the pious dead, you observe, is cotemporaneous or synchronous with the change of the heavens and the earth; "all those who attain to that resurrection shall be perfect and vigorous in soul; so that none shall be imperfect, or infantile, or aged. The adult that is saved will be always young." The Rev. Mr. Govett says: "The distinction must be made between those living on the earth, or born into the world at that time, and the risen saints who have been raised from the dead by Christ." The Septuagint translation is probably the most correct. The Septuagint Greek was translated from the Hebrew by some seventy scholars selected for that purpose 260 years before the birth of Christ. They were masters of the Greek and Hebrew tongues. Their translation differs occasionally from the authorized translation in our Bible. Translated literally from the Greek of the seventy it is thus: "There shall not be any more carried out from thence to burial an infant of days, a youth, nor an old man who hath not filled his time; for the man of an hundred years shall be a youth; but the sinner dying at an hundred years old shall be accursed." This translation it would be easy to piece with the rest of the passage, except for the last clause. The opinion of Mr. Govett, a very able commentator upon Isaiah, is that the declaration that the sinner an hundred years old shall be accursed refers not to a sinner existing in the millennial day, but to that outburst that takes place at the close of that day, when we read in the Apocalypse that

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the nations at the four quarters of the earth come up and encompass the saints of the Most High, headed by Satan, loosed from his prison, and are at last destroyed by the fearful judgments of God, and sent to their own place. I must say that this last solution seems to me more accordant with the tone and the analogy of Scripture than the other. But I must add, what is not without weight and probability, that in the judgment of some the millennial state is to be composed of two distinct classes: first, the dead that are raised when Christ comes to inaugurate it; the living that are changed by his word, lifted up into the glory cloud, and ministering as angels to the other; but that there shall survive the conflagration thousands of men, the mass of whom are believers, but mingled with whom will be unbelievers; and that these last will continue to the end; but that the good and the bad, the converted and the unconverted, shall live to the age of the antediluvian patriarchs; a hundred years of age being the period of infancy; a thousand years, the length of the millennial day, being the full duration of the life of its happy inhabitants. Let us honestly look at some of these thoughts, and show the grounds on which they are laid. First of all, I may state that Hitchcock, the eminent American geologist, and no less eminent Christian, holds, and has reasoned it out with some force, though not conclusively in my humble judgment, that death was not introduced into Paradise by sin; but merely the penalty, or the sting that is in death. We know as a geological fact that death existed in the vast pre-Adamite epochs; of this we are sure; but I have always associated death, in the pre-Adamite geological epochs, with the fall of the angels, though Scripture is silent, and conjecture is all that I have to adduce. Hitchcock maintains that if Adam and Eve had never sinned they would have died; but he says that to them, after probably a thousand years, death, instead of being a struggle, an agony, a conflict between the body, reluctant to let its inmate go—and that inmate, reluctant to leave the old and the familiar home—would have been in Adam's

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case, if he had never sinned, a peaceful sleep, a joyous transference; a gentle, unfelt step from the low lands of beautiful Paradise to the higher lands of yet more beautiful heaven, into which Paradise should culminate and close. This opinion, if, of course, it be true, would justify what seems to be indicated here, the contingency of death even during the millennial period; for if the millennium be Paradise restored, as I believe it will; and if death in that type occurred in Paradise that was; there can be no difficulty in assuming that death, as a mere transference, a mere passing out of one house into another, may take place, not of course among risen saints, in the millennial era. But it seems to me there are fatal objections to the theory of Hitchcock; for let any honest man, without a theory or a crotchet to support, read the Bible, and in ninety-nine instances out of a hundred the impression will be that death and sin are inseparably associated. I cannot get over such a passage as this: "Death reigned from Adam to Moses;" "the wages of sin is death;" and the triumph that the apostle predicts as the crowning glory of the age that is to come is: "Then shall be brought to pass the saying"—it is not yet brought to pass—"that is written, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" "And the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." All these passages seem to me to prove that Hitchcock's theory is untenable, and that the true opinion is what I have constantly urged and commented upon—"The wages of sin is death."

The second theory that undertakes to solve the difficulty of this passage is that the millennial rest which succeeds the conflagration of the earth, and is inaugurated upon the bosom of a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, is not a perfect, but a progressive state; that the everlasting state is described in Revelation xxi. and xxii., upon the same earth, however; and that the millennial state will be as much superior to our present state as the future glorious state in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse will be to the millennial state; that it is one of the great stages, as

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thought by the Rev. Edward Bickersteth, a man of eminent piety, of fine intellect, and of thoughtful habits; he regarded the millennial rest as one of the grand stages in man's progression to his perfect and his everlasting state. He thinks it will be a stage superior to that which is now, vastly superior; the majority of the human race now are unbelievers; then, if this theory be correct, the vast majority will be believers; the mere handful, the exceptional case, will be the "sinner that is accursed," and "the infant dying at a hundred years old." And on this hypothesis the picture of the future, like the picture of a landscape, contains the millennial state in the foreground, the everlasting state beyond it in the background; but the two so interlacing and intermingling, like a binary star, that we often think the picture denotes the one when really it denotes the two. If this should be the correct solution it will be at least a presumptive explanation of the difficulty which has puzzled and perplexed so many—that there will be incidental death or incidental curse in that holy, and happy, and blessed state. The Rev. Horatio Bonar, a very admirable and excellent minister of the Free Church, says: "In the millennial state there will be only incidental instances of death, remnants of sin, as spots on the face of the sun, hid in the excess of splendour." His idea is that the millennial state will be glorious sunshine; but that there will be exceptional clouds, specks or spots, two of which are contained in the text on which I am now commenting; but that these shall be as nothing in comparison of the overwhelming splendour in which they are merged and lost. But then, again, the difficulty will occur to you, as it has occurred to thousands—we can understand the dead in Christ being raised, and taken beyond the reach of the last fiery baptism that makes our earth a new earth; we can understand the living Christian being changed and translated from the touch of the overwhelming and the destroying flame, but you naturally say, how can you suppose that God will spare from that consuming flame even those that are unbelievers and his enemies,

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neither risen nor changed? because the theory before us assumes that there will be in the millennial rest, and that there will emerge from the last conflagration, some who are not converted, who are not believers, but sinners; however few, however far between, yet the fact that there will be some suggests the difficulty how they can have escaped the last conflagration. The answer adduced by Mr. Bonar, or rather the illustrations which he gives, are so far decisive. The flood, to which the last conflagration is likened, overflowed the earth; but not only were the righteous spared, but the unconverted also, for unregenerate Canaan was in the ark, and emerged from it on Ararat, and entered upon the new dispensation which began on the brow of Ararat.

Again, God marched the Israelites through the Red Sea; the great ocean opening up its bosom to be a beautiful dry promenade for the Israelites; while the instant that the Egyptians went in, its mighty waters collapsed, and formed for them a watery grave. But through that Red Sea it was not all Christians that marched; they were not all converted that stood with Miriam on the other side when she struck the strings of her harp, and joined with her triumphant song, speaking of him who had gloriously triumphed, and cast Pharaoh and all his chariots into the Red Sea. Thousands passed through the sea who were anything but children of God. So again we find Lot's daughters were preserved in Zoar; and yet Lot's daughters were not Christians, when fire fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah. Mr. Bonar argues, if unconverted men were by God's own provision spared from the flood, if unconverted men were by God's mercy carried through the Red Sea, if unconverted women were delivered from the fires of Sodom and Gomorrah, is it not at least possible that God will, it amounts to a certainty that he can, deliver from the last fire along with his own, on whom the fire shall exert no fury, those—however few is not the question—whose hearts are not renewed, and who will sin amidst the splendour of the millennial day, just as they have sinned in the world that now is? Such is an at-

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tempted solution of the difficulty, so far that sinners may possibly survive; if the translation I have given, or the exposition I have first adduced, be not the real one.

But you ask, where will the risen saints be? because we find in Thessalonians, and this is not a question about which men differ, it is a thing revealed by the Spirit of God, that Christ shall descend, the dead in Christ shall be raised first; the instant Christ comes, every grave shall open, every green sod shall turn aside; every monument of bronze, of marble, or of brass, shall rend; and the cold, scattered, mouldering ashes, inspired by a celestial breath, shall re-form the mselves again into those very bodies and those very likenesses; nothing being eliminated and left in the grave but sin and imperfection. When that takes place, where will they be? The idea that shocks a sensitive Christian mind is this: can we suppose that those that have been raised from the dead, who are glorious in holiness, will be mixed up with people, however few, who shall be sinners? They who give the solution I have quoted hold that Jerusalem is to be the central capital of the whole earth, in which Christ's risen ones shall be; it seems, secondly, to be revealed that they shall be caught up in the cloud, and that glory cloud is to be the grand dwelling of the saints of God till the earth is meet for them to descend and abide upon it, its glory and its ornament for ever. But is there not something improbable in the idea that the perfect in holiness and in happiness should see, or should in any sense be near the fallen, the guilty, and the sinful? It is answered, are not angels perfect? are they not perfectly holy? Yet there are angels in every congregation; angels whisper in your counting-houses; angels help you in your difficulties; angels strengthened the great Master in his agony; angels are "ministering servants to all who are the heirs of salvation." The spirits of those who have gone before us are nearer to us than our relatives across the Tweed or beyond the Channel; they may sympathize with our joys, they may see our sorrows; and while we know nothing of them, they may know a great deal of us. It

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though inaudible to our blunt ears, are still audible. Voices spoken never cease; nay, the tread of your foot upon a spiculum of snow makes the whole earth vibrate; we cannot feel it, but it does not soon cease. If you strike a blow, its reverberations and its repetitions go on for ever. What a thought, of the whispers we have breathed, the words, the idle words we have spoken, if the judgment-day should be a vast whispering gallery, in which all these sounds should be heard with awfully distinct crashes! what a terrible scene would be the solemnity of a judgment morn! and what a precious thought that the blood of Jesus Christ can take away the guilt of them, if God even should permit the continuance, or the reminiscence, or the thought of any of them! But this earth may undergo a complete conflagration, and yet not be even changed in its structure. Take a piece of asbestos cloth; cast it into the fire; it will become red-hot; not a bit of it is consumed, not an atom of it changed. In the same manner, take the potter's vessel formed of the finest clay; lay on it the most exquisite pictures—and I have seen pottery with paintings worthy of the masters of the age—put it into the red fire; that pottery will be made hard by heat; and the most exquisite traces of the pencil, instead of being removed, will only be made fixed and permanent while the pottery lasts. So we may consider that this earth may be thrown into that last heat that is destined to consume it; and when I speak of a conflagration consuming the earth I am not giving an opinion, I am stating a sure and absolute future fact predicted in the plainest speech in God's holy word.

There is one other thought I must here call attention to: the prediction at the close of this passage, namely, "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock; and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord." Now physiologists will tell you that to take this literally is absurd; that the lion was made to tear; that the ox is physically made to be graminivorous; that the tiger is physically

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made to be carnivorous. It is well known that the viscera of the ox are, I believe, nine times his own length; the viscera of the lion, I think, only three times his own length; and that the physiological structure is such that the habits are indicated by this physical organization. But we should never forget that the fall of man was not an unexpected incident that overtook God; he saw it all; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that he made provision for the contingency before that contingency took place. This we know for certain, that in Paradise all was harmony, and peace, and love; and this we also know, that every prediction of that glorious future in which all past ages shall be crowned gives the idea of the brute creation participating in the benefit of man's restoration. We are told by the apostle, "all creation," the earth, "groaneth and travaileth in pain, seeking to be delivered;" there is nothing but agony in the depths, agony in the heights; all nature is disturbed; its key-note was lost in Paradise, it is only found in Christ; and its harmony cannot be till that key-note is struck again. But here we are told that all those animals now living in hostility shall be restored to harmony and peace. Everywhere throughout the Bible we are told that moral causes have physical effects. For instance, in Joel we read: "The vine is dried up, and the fig tree languisheth; the pomegranate tree, the palm tree also, and the apple tree, even all the trees of the field, are withered." Why? "Because joy is withered away from the sons of men." Here is a moral calamity followed by physical disasters. So again in the prophet Jeremiah we have another picture of the same thing, the 12th chapter, at the 4th verse: "How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither for the wickedness of them that dwell therein? the beasts are consumed, and the birds; because they said, He shall not see our last end." I might quote other passages to show that a moral transformation has its reaction in a physical regeneration or transformation also. And if it be true that man's fall brought discord into the animal creation, is it not reasonable to argue

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that man's restoration shall bring harmony into that creation again? As Mr. Bonar says: "Is there anything either preposterous or absurd in supposing God's goodly handiwork shall be fully restored; that creation shall cease to groan, and that the beasts of the field shall no longer devour each other?" And if I needed a confirmatory evidence of what I am now saying, I would quote what is said of the serpent: "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." Let us mark well that strange and suggestive clause: the other brutes, the lion, the tiger, the ox, the sheep, the lamb, are all to live in perfect harmony and felicity, recognising man as their lord, when man receives Christ as his King, Creator, and Redeemer; but one exception is made: "Dust shall be the serpent's meat." What was the curse pronounced upon the serpent? "Dust shalt thou eat for ever;" and here is the curse continued. The only exception to the universal restoration of the brute creation is the serpent; and the curse is to lie upon him, as upon him of whom he became the instrument, for ever and for ever. Now if that was a literal curse literally denounced upon the serpent, and to be literally continued, I look upon the restoration of harmony in the brute creation as a literal result of the restoration of harmony between the sinner and God the Saviour. When I want to strengthen my faith, I take a retrospective glance to that lowly birth in the manger, to that cross upon the mount of Calvary; but when I want to get a little sunshine into this wintry, dark world, why should I be debarred starting on the wings of hope, and gazing into that glorious future when o'er our ransomed world Christ, Redeemer, King, Creator, shall come again to reign? I confess I love to look into the future, guided by God's word, just as much as to look back into the past; for as a Christian my constituent elements are faith, which leans upon the cross; and love, that looks up to the throne; and hope, that shoots into the future, and comes back with the sweet olive branch in its mouth, to convince me that evil shall not last for ever.

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LECTURE III.

FORELIGHTS OF THE GLORY.

WE revert to those remarkable words of God, so fraught with joy and gladness:—

"*But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,*" *&c.*—ISAIAH lxv. 18–25.

I COMMENCED my last explanatory remarks on this most interesting, but in some respects difficult chapter by noticing what I have ascertained from considerable research, that many writers on prophetic subjects are persuaded that whilst the risen saints, or those raised from the dead and glorified when Christ comes; and the changed saints, or those who do not die—"for we shall not all die, but some shall be changed;" are with Christ in the glory cloud or shechinah, or in the New Jerusalem, the splendid capital and metropolis of the earth; that there will be, cotemporaneous with them who have emerged from the world's last fiery baptism, and unconsumed by it, others somewhere on earth who shall live in the flesh as we do now: the vast and overwhelming majority they think will be righteous; and incidental evil, in the words of Horatio Bonar, shall be "like specks on the sun," but existing until the close of the millennial day; when all evil, in its most infinitesimal degree, shall be expunged, and the earth shall be the porch and the vestibule of a holy and a happy universe. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth," is the promise quoted by Peter in the 3rd chapter of his Second Epistle, where he says that "the earth and the things that are therein shall be burned up, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" after which

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"we, according to his promise," in Isaiah, "look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." From this it appears that the conflagration of the old framework—not its annihilation, but its improvement—shall take place when Christ is revealed from heaven in the day of the Lord, taking vengeance in flaming fire upon them that disobey him, while he comes to be glorified and admired in all them that believe. If this promise, "I create new heavens and a new earth," in the 17th verse, be the commencement of the millennial heavens and the millennial earth, as I hold it unquestionably is, how am I to explain all the features there given consistently with the belief that all is perfect, and pure, and holy? "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her:" that is most satisfactory to those who hold the idea I have invariably impressed that there shall be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor death, during the millennium. But then comes the expression in the 20th verse, and it is the difficulty. Translated according to the Septuagint, it is: "There shall not be any more carried out thence to burial an infant of days;" that is compatible with there being no death; "nor an old man who hath not filled his time;" that also is perfectly compatible with there being no death; "for the man of an hundred years shall be as a youth." Yes, the aged man that is raised at the last day will live for ever in his meridian vigour, youth, and perfection; retaining all the identity of his physical economy, but radiant with immortal youth, and shining with a lustre that never shall be impaired. Then comes the last clause: "For the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed." A solution given by some is, that the words, "the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed," are added to describe what takes place at the close of the thousand years; for at the close of the thousand years we read that nations in the four quarters of the globe break forth, and are afterwards crushed and destroyed. Another difficulty, supposing this passage describes the millennial rest, is: "they shall build

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houses." This is obvious metaphor. It is the representation of a state of perfect felicity and safety. People now build a house and do not live to dwell in it; or they build a house and another seizes it; and it may and perhaps does mean, taking it in the figurative sense, which is perfectly legitimate, there shall be absolute and uninterrupted security: "the gates of it shall not be shut," are words used of the apocalyptic city, in the Apocalypse; it may not mean that the city will literally have gates; it may be a figurative expression denoting perpetual peace. Then the expression, "not bring forth for trouble;" if that be an allusion to the curse pronounced upon Eve, one cannot suppose births to take place during the millennial rest; but clearly it must be accepted as a declaration that there shall be no curse, and therefore no more consequences of that curse. Then the last verse: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together;" that is certainly compatible with all that is predicted in the millennial rest; for as the brutes fell with man, on man's restoration the brutes shall be restored to harmony.

Let me in the course of these remarks—and I will allude to some of these points as I proceed—show, first, what is stated to precede this happy sabbath of a thousand years; what are the marks of the Saturday evening that merges into the twilight of a thousand years' day of blessedness and sunshine; and in the second place, try to explain what succeeds the dawn of that blessed era; and thus bring before you some of the difficulties that cling to the features of the millennial age indicated by the prophet. What may we expect to precede it? One very awful feature will characterize the Saturday evening, the six thousandth year, that precedes the seventh, or the millennary of the world, if such it be. "This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For"—and here is what shall precede it; the nearer its sunburst the denser will be the moral darkness that precedes—"men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy; without natural

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affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." Here are some of the awful brands which are to mark many at the close of this economy; but out of all, and in spite of all, will emerge and shine with more resplendent lustre the true church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We shall see these things more by the contrast; the light and the shadow will become the one darker, the other only the more brilliant. Preceding that event, the coming of the Lord, the conflagration of the earth, the new heavens and the new earth, there will be a more extensive preaching of the Gospel than ever there was before. Is not this a clear sign of the age? Was the Gospel ever more faithfully, more fully, more earnestly, more extensively preached than it is at the present hour? Why, many of you have lived to recollect that for a bishop to preach in a play-house would have almost ended in his head being taken off, or his being banished from the church; and for any minister of the Gospel to go and preach from a waggon or an omnibus, as the Bishop of London now and then does, would have been set down as undignified, or arrant and intolerable fanaticism. But now-a-days, in all places, in the exercise of a common sense that is admirable, and at all times, we hear of men of all denominations setting forth with marvellous perspicuity and power the preciousness of the soul, the instancy of eternity, the efficacy of a Saviour's blood, the shortness of the time, the nearness of the end, and the necessity of all making ready and preparing to meet the Lord. There will be previous to this period a pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit of God. I have stated in my book, "Redemption Draweth Nigh," that I believed the Pentecost of 1800 years ago was but the flush of morn, preparatory to the noon; but the early shower—the latter rains being yet to come. The language of Joel in his 2nd chapter has not yet been exhausted; it remains yet to be fulfilled. For what does he say? "I

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will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;" that is the first; not upon the Jews, nor a handful of Gentiles assembled at Jerusalem; but "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit." Then he says: "And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness;" this has not taken place; our Lord says it will take place when he comes; "and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." Now I ask you at this moment to look around and see unprecedented numbers of men who are not ministers preaching the Gospel of Christ with no common power and success. He says: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh;" and men and handmaids, and servants, and women, shall all speak. I have no doubt that the impression produced by the Spirit of God poured out upon all flesh will be so intense, and so vivid, and so irresistible, that you will have mothers preaching in their homes, servants preaching in the hall, tradesmen sparing an hour from business in order to go and preach the Gospel. The church will have her volunteers as well as the nation. Men, some of whose antecedents are anything but brilliant, are now preaching the Gospel with marvellous efficacy and power; and though we may not like their taste, though we may be pained by many of the expressions they employ, injudicious and indiscreet as they are, yet God uses sometimes very rough instruments to do very rough work; and if they are the means of bringing souls to the Saviour, and hastening on the kingdom of Christ, we will pardon the rough garment for the sake of the brilliant truth that is expressed by the lips of him that wears it. There will be not only the universal preaching of the Gospel at all hours, in all places; but there will be also a somewhat like preparation of all flesh for that great day. Some think that the words, "I will send Elijah before the great and terrible day of the

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Lord," was fulfilled in the advent of John the Baptist; and that all that we are to understand by the promise of Elijah preceding Christ's second advent is merely the spirit of preparation being infused everywhere previous to that era. But this does not seem to me to exhaust the words of Scripture. For instance, our Lord says: "Truly Elijah shall first come, and restore all things;" but then he adds, "Elijah is come already." The two things seem inconsistent; but it does appear to me from various reasons that Elijah will personally precede Christ who comes to reign, just as John the Baptist personally preceded Christ who came to suffer. Recollect that Elijah needs not to be raised from the dead; he never saw death; he was translated; and why translated, unless for some sublime mission similar to that which is here indicated? Let us mark well our Lord's words. He says: "Truly Elijah shall first come, and restore all things." But if Elijah was John the Baptist, can it be said of John that he restored all things? He did not restore anything at all; he preached repentance. Then if you say, how do you explain the other passage, "Elijah is come already?" I explain it by referring to the corresponding passage in Luke, where he says: "John the Baptist shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah;" in other words, John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah; but he was not Elijah. Our Lord says of John the Baptist that "he came, and they knew him not; but have done unto him whatsoever they listed; likewise also shall the Son of man suffer of them." What does he here say? He says John the Baptist came, and they killed him; but that cannot be said of Elijah; he never was killed; he was translated; he is in glory; and if he came to the earth in the person of John the Baptist, he could not have been killed. But certain parties appealed to John himself; they came to him and said: "Art thou Messiah? And he said, No. Art thou that prophet? He said, No. Art thou Elijah? And he said, I am not Elijah." Well, John the Baptist surely knew who he was; and yet he denied that he was the Elijah who is to

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come and restore all things. The passage, "This is Elijah, that ought to come," the French translators have given the right meaning of: "*C'est l'Elie qui devait venir.*" "This is *that* Elijah who ought to come," now, at this moment; the Elijah that you are to look for now is John the Baptist; he is come in the spirit and power of Elijah; but Elijah personally is yet to come, and precede my glorious advent to triumph and to reign. It does therefore seem highly probable that before our Lord comes, Elijah, who is living in the body, who never died, and is not therefore to be raised from the dead, will herald the return of the Prince of Peace; and just as a suffering Baptist came to precede a suffering Christ, so a glorified Elijah will come to precede a glorified and a triumphant Christ; at least I cannot explain these passages in any other way. If you can satisfy yourselves that my inference is not sustained by these passages, then you must explain them otherwise; but it seems to me the inevitable inference from these clauses that a personal Elijah is personally to precede the coming of the Son of man.

Another mark of the approach of this era will be great scoffing as the world listens to the voice of the preacher: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." We are told in the Epistle of Jude: "Beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts;" or, as Peter says in his Epistle: "In the last time there shall be scoffers, saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were." But nevertheless shall be ushered in that great event, the burden of a thousand prophecies, the object of a thousand promises, namely, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, the great God and Saviour. I do not know a single passage in Scripture that states there is to be the millennium, and after it Christ is to come. The whole of Christendom believes there is to be a millennium; there is no doubt about that; but some good men believe the millennium

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dawns first, and Christ comes at its setting. I cannot see any warrant for that in the Word of God. Whatever be the nature of his manifestation; whatever be the splendour with which he comes in the clouds of heaven; whatever be the manner in which he shall appear, whether as the *shechinah* that dwelt between the cherubim in the glory cloud, or in whatever way he shall appear, all Scripture is full of the thought that he will come first, and the millennium succeed next. The sun will rise first above the horizon, then will be the light of day; not the day first, and the sun afterwards, but the sun first, and the sunshine after. And hence the words constantly used in Scripture: "Behold, I come as a thief." "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night; for when they shall say, Peace, peace; sudden destruction shall come upon them, as travail upon a woman with child." So again we read that: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." And again we read: "The grace of God teacheth us to live soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Saviour." When he comes, this passage in Peter will be fulfilled: "The earth and the things that are therein shall be burned up; the elements shall melt with fervent heat;" and they shall be superseded by, or rather they shall blossom into a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Now these are some of the antecedents of that great and glorious event.

If any ask when it shall be, my answer to that is, the day and the hour no man can give. It has often been given for me in newspapers, in magazines of all sorts and shapes; but where they find the foundation of what they affirm I do not know. In "Redemption Draweth Nigh," I devoted two chapters to an analysis of the

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dates of prophecy; but constantly I have repeated, what I cannot get some people to understand or at least to accept, that I am not sure when the date begins; and therefore I am not sure of the time when it closes. I gave a solution of those dates on certain likely principles; but repeatedly and again I added, I may be wrong; I may be in error in my calculations; I may be wrong in the commencement of the date; I may be so in the assignment of its close. The great epoch of 1260 years some begin at A.D. 532, ending it at 1792; adding the other periods of Daniel, ending in 1867. Others begin the same great period in the year 606. But the remarkable fact that I have brought out is not that the world is to end in 1867, which I never prophesied anywhere; nor that the world is to close its present state at that year; but that great chronological periods of prophecy bisect that year, and intersect each other at that year; and strange to say, men that begin these dates at different periods, on different grounds, find them meeting about 1867, as the termination of them all. But what is immediately to succeed I cannot say. What is to take place at the exhaustion of the great periods men have different opinions of. The opinion of some very eminent scholars is that Mahometanism and Romanism are to depart like a cloud, and that the whole earth is to be filled with light, and joy, and peace; others seem to incline to the belief that in 1867 will be the close of this present economy, and the commencement of another and a better; but no sane man that I know has put on the mantle of the prophet, and predicted the close of the world in 1867; and it is only an evidence of the fearful want of charity in the last times, and of Peter's predicted scoffing of scoffers, that they should make such statements on so absurd, unjust, and untenable premises. When therefore it is to be no man can state; none of us know; none of us can absolutely determine; but it is a duty to explain these dates if we can; it is a duty to ask your attention to them; and that minister of the Gospel does not seem to me to fulfil his mission who skips the

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difficult parts of Scripture, and treats you only to those select texts that have been discussed over and over again. There are certain texts that every preacher in Christendom preaches on, but thousands of texts most precious no preacher ever seems to touch. It is our duty to try and explain the whole Word of God, and to make plain and intelligible to the people, as far as God may enable us, the marvellous things of the Gospel of the kingdom of heaven. Some have said, however, that it is a very wrong thing to study prophecy at all, or to attempt to explain what has not been fulfilled. I will read to you a passage from the writings of Dr. Villiers, late Bishop of Durham, vindicating the very things I am now speaking of: "Some persons tell us that interpreters of prophecy differ so widely that it is useless to study it, and that it only tends to discompose and unsettle men's minds; and therefore, they say, it would be much better to leave it alone. But, my brethren, are we at liberty to take up this subject? What important doctrine has not formed the subject of dispute? Take the very question of God's electing love and sovereign grace; it is not at all unlikely that among those to whom I am speaking there may be some that do not hold the view of our 17th Article; and yet they would be very much surprised if I were not to read the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, or the 9th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, because men dispute about them. But even supposing that these prophecies were subjects of dispute, even supposing that they did unsettle men's minds, who has given us leave to cull out portions of the Word of God? who has taught us that the promises of God are to be set aside as of no importance to us? Just let me refer you to one passage in the Book of Revelation, confessedly a most beautiful book, and confessedly referring to things to come. It is in the 3rd verse of the 1st chapter. We read: 'Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy.' Surely, brethren," adds the Bishop, "we are not so very rich in our possession of blessings that we can afford to throw one blessing

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away; and if we cannot throw it away, how can we close our eyes to the study of unfulfilled prophecy?" Most just and sensible remarks, whether uttered by a Bishop or a Presbyter, and worthy of being accepted and regarded by every Christian man.

Let us now try to ascertain what succeeds the advent of Christ, the conflagration of the earth, that inaugurates a new heavens and a new earth. First of all, there will be the resurrection of all that have fallen asleep in Christ. Of this we are absolutely sure; for the apostle says in the Epistle to the Thessalonians that Christ shall descend, that the trumpet shall sound. He tells us: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ" —"in Christ" is the definition of a Christian; "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ"—"and the dead in Christ," that is, the Christian dead, "shall rise first." The rest of the dead do not rise till the thousand years are finished. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This is the first thing that will take place. There is something unspeakably grand in the thought that the green turf shall roll aside, and the cold ashes that have slept for a thousand years beneath it shall be quickened with life, and rise in immortality, incorruptibility, and beauty; Abraham and Sarah from the oaks of Mamre; the apostles, and prophets, and preachers and teachers from the dens and caves of the Alps; the great ocean, the sepulchre of nations, shall pour forth its buried millions; and they shall rise, and reign with Christ a thousand years; and this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible incorruptibility; and then, for it is not yet brought to

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pass, "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Death shall be swallowed up in victory. All this we are perfectly sure of. The second thing that takes place will be, Satan shall be bound a thousand years. You ask, is this literal? Unquestionably it is literal. Take Cruden's Concordance, and look out the words "bind" and "bound," and you will see that it must be taken here as literal, strictly literal. He shall be bound a thousand years. What does he do now? With all the archangel's wisdom, inspired by all the fiend's depravity, he goeth about seeking whom he may devour. I believe that great crimes have a Satanic birth; that the more flagrant crimes that deform our history are the inspiration of the wicked one; and perhaps if we knew all we should mingle pity with our reprobation of the greatest criminal upon earth. But at that day Satan shall have the glory of all he has done; and God shall have the glory of all that he has done; and Satan shall be removed from our world for a thousand years—no more the prince of the power of the air; no more to go about seeking whom he may devour; no more to inject into men's hearts sparks that kindle evil passions, and into men's minds clouds that darken precious truths. That one fact, that Satan shall be removed from his action on our world, will be the lifting up of that world to a new, a nobler, a lovelier level. In the third place, there shall come upon our earth all the happiness of Paradise; there shall be Eden atmosphere, Eden earth; Eden flowers shall bloom, and Eden trees shall grow. The groans of earth shall cease; its travail and its expectancy will be over; and there will be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. The brute creation then existing shall live in harmony and peace together. Man's fall brought the discord; man's restoration shall restore them into harmony. It was never meant that the brutes should devour and destroy each other. The only difficulty that remains is what I have already referred to: the incidental allusions to death; the remark that at the

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close of the thousand years Satan is loosed—why he is loosed I cannot say; but depend upon it there is a reason for it, because there is Scripture sanctioning the assertion—and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. But who are these nations? There the difficulty crops up; because as far as we have seen only the risen dead in glorified bodies are the inhabitants of the millennial temple; but here we read that there will still be wicked nations that exist somewhere; we find also that the false prophet in some shape has his life perpetuated; for we read: "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are; and shall be tormented day and night for ever." I believe this in its strict and rigid literality. We find, therefore, the existence of these nations; we read, secondly, of Satan being loosed. When we turn to Isaiah xi. there are words that seem to indicate infants present in the millennial day; for we read there: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." Then again we read: "The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp; and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den." These are features I dare not conceal and cannot perfectly explain, except upon the hypothesis held by the same able and eminent interpreters of prophecy, that there will be two races on the millennial earth, the glorified saints ministering to the church below; but that as now the vast majority of the world are strangers to the truth, and Christ's flock is a small one, then it will be reversed; and the vast majority, the overwhelming majority will be regenerate persons; and only incidental sin, and sickness, and death will be there; and they also believe that those who constitute the church then, the visible church, will enjoy directly all the blessings and benefits of the ransomed and the renovated earth. They say, for in-

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stance, that "the child shall die an hundred years old" is to be accepted literally. What was the age of man before the flood? A thousand years. And they say that those who are not risen, those who are not in glorified bodies, will live a thousand years; that is, live out the millennial day; and only incidentally shall those cases of death and sin occur which are indicated in those passages I have alluded to. But then we find that, some way or another, if this be true—and I am only stating candidly all the difficulties, for there are difficulties, and it would be unfair and unjust to deny them—that those nations that come up at the end of the thousand years must be very numerous; and secondly, they must be very wicked; because they come up to seek to destroy the camp and the saints of the Most High. I notice too that expression even in the height of millennial felicity, assuming that the 21st and 22nd chapters of Revelation describe the millennial rest: "And they shall bring the glory and honour of the *nations* into it. And the *nations* of them that are saved." And then how remarkable is that expression: "the tree yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the *nations*!" Some have proposed a solution of a great difficulty; that the millennial day is also the day of judgment. I do not believe that the day of judgment means twenty-four hours. It is in all probability a protracted period. Whilst the risen saints are not judged, but glorified, many believe, and if I mistake not, Dr. Villiers among the rest—certainly the late Edward Bickersteth believed it—that the passage in Matthew xxiv. is the picture of what will occur even in the millennial day, where we read: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken;" probably by the great conflagration described in Peter. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and

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great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." And in the next place: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all *nations*"—the nations constantly spoken of—"and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." The impression of many is that the whole millennial day will be ceaseless manifestation of judgment or discrimination exercised upon the living who emerge from the last conflagration, and constitute the nations of the earth; a portion apostate, a portion loyal; a portion unregenerate, a portion regenerate.

I have thus told out all the difficulty, and the only difficulty, that we have to deal with. I have read all I could lay my hand on; I have thought it over in every shape; and the difficulty still presents itself to me as at present insuperable, how, if the 21st and 22nd chapters of Revelation are the photographic portraits of the millennial day, there are to be somewhere nations that will come up in the end against the camp of the saints of the Most High; how there is to be evil, sin, or sickness, or sorrow, however infinitesimal, I cannot explain. Perhaps as the day draws nearer God may give us more and brighter light.

Let me quote one or two passages from eminent men upon this subject. Dr. Chalmers says, on the 50th Psalm: "This looks like the descent of the Son of man on the Mount of Olives, with all the accompaniments of the Jewish conversion, the first resurrection from the dead, and the destruction of the hosts of Antichrist." Dr. Chalmers, in his earlier days, opposed the views I am now stating; in his latter days, and in his ripe mind, he acquiesced in those views, and boldly proclaimed them. On Isaiah xi. he says: "Christ will appear for his own; then will be the days of love and universal

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peace; when the animals shall cease to devour each other. And this regeneration of the world is obviously combined with the restoration of the Jews to their own land." He says on another passage: "This seeing eye to eye makes for the personal reign of Christ, whose feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives." Bishop Butler, the most powerful mind probably that ever lived, the author of that magnificent and marvellous work the Analogy, says: "Things of this kind in John naturally turn the thoughts of serious men towards the full completion of prophetic history respecting the final restoration of the Jews. The glorious reign of Christ," says Bishop Butler, "shall commence when we shall reign with him on the earth." Dr. Urwick, of Dublin, who does not acquiesce in all these thoughts, says of one: "The Lord who on the cross spoiled principalities and powers will not stay in his career till he wrests the very earth itself from the grasp of its usurper, recreating the earth in unrivalled purity and glory, and taking possession of it with his people." Now Dr. Urwick, an eloquent and good man, differs from me on some of these thoughts, but in the main thought he is at one. Dr. Chalmers, again, observes: "As far as we can read into prophecies before us, we feel as if there is to be the arrest of a sudden and unlooked-for visitation to be laid on the ordinary processes of nature and history; and that the millennium is to be ushered in in the midst of judgments, and desolations, and fearful convulsions, which will uproot the present framework of society." So I am not alone in the thoughts I have given expression to.

One thing closes beautifully this interesting passage: Jerusalem shall be a rejoicing and her people a joy. Over all the area on which the risen saints shall meet; in that consecrated metropolis of which they will be the inhabitants, and over which will hang the glory, there will be nothing but joy. Jerusalem shall be a rejoicing; no more weeping, nor tears, nor sadness, in that grand cathedral; no flag-stone will be lifted for the burial of the dead; no funeral chant will be heard within its

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walls; no funeral procession will wind along its aisles or will darken its beautiful light. All hearts there will be bounding; none shall be breaking. Every heart shall pour forth its thankfulness to God as a star its light in gratitude, as a flower its perfume in praise. There will be no wilderness unreclaimed; no discord in their songs; no misery unatoned for, no sin unforgiven; there will be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor crying; there shall be no more death. Notwithstanding all the difficulties, I take the 21st and 22nd chapters of Revelation as literal predictions of what is to be, and believe that the full actualization is to take place in that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. The cry of the miserable Jews who assemble on Saturday near the mosque of Omar: "El Bene—Bene bethka bekarob—bemheira—bemheira beyamenu, bekarob:" "Lord, build—Lord, build, build thy house—speedily, in haste—even in our day build thy house speedily!" will soon be answered. In the words of a sweet poet—

"Sometimes flashes on my sight,
Through present wrongs, the eternal right;
And step by step since time began
I see the steady gain of man.

"And still the new transcends the old
In signs and tokens manifold.
Slaves rise up men—the olive waves
With roots deep set in battle-graves.

"Through the harsh voices of our day
A low sweet prelude finds its way;
Through clouds of doubt, and creeds of fear,
A light is breaking calm and clear.

"That song of love, now low and far,
Ere long shall swell from star to star;
That light the breaking day which tips
The golden-spired Apocalypse."

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LECTURE IV.

THE BINDING OF SATAN.

THE archangel fallen is reserved for chains. He is a usurper and an intruder now, and must be expelled at that day. St. John says—

"*And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand,*" *&c.*—REVELATION XX. 1-5.

I NEED not remark once more that on subjects confessedly relating to the future, good men—eminently Christian men—are at issue; I do not mean to say they quarrel, but they differ; and it would be strange if in speaking of those events that stretch into future ages, we should all see eye to eye. But I cannot help mentioning a most remarkable fact, the fulfilment of a prediction of the great Sir Isaac Newton, the most accomplished and the most successful student of prophecy;—he who unbraided the sunbeam; he who weighed the stars in his balance; he who estimated their density, and measured their bulk, and calculated their distances and their progression in their orbits, descended from the loftiest physical investigations to the study of the grandest apocalyptic predictions, and so became the most successful student that ever tried to unfold and to explain the mysteries and the meaning of this book. He has stated, what has been literally fulfilled, that an age would come when men would study this book more than they had ever done, and when they would agree much more about its meaning, and its import, and its application, than they had ever agreed before. This is fact; for whilst some still retain a process of solution that I think is untenable, the most emi-

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nent, the most learned, the most gifted, and I may add equally pious, hold an interpretation which seems to me to be the just, and textual, and scriptural one. Let me show first of all how this chapter has been understood by some. There are, first, those—a number gradually diminishing—who think that the angel binding Satan is purely figurative; that the resurrection of the saints, called the first resurrection, is merely the elevation and the ascendancy of Christianity, and the ascendancy of true Christians; that evil will be very much subdued during these happy years; and that those beheaded for the witness of Jesus mean not the resurrection of literally such, but of men of like spirit, like love, like faithfulness; who shall be spiritually ascendant, and shall spiritually reign with the Lord Jesus Christ, not present himself upon earth, but reigning by his Spirit in the hearts of his people. They hold that this economy—for all look forward to such an economy—will be introduced by no grand and miraculous events, by no disturbance of the present equilibrium of things; but that it will be the gradual expansion of what is truth, and life, and peace; they understand that it means simply a purer church, greater union among Christians, the places of influence and power consecrated and occupied by the good and the pious, and Christianity vastly predominating over all the earth and throughout the world in what is called the millennial era. This was an almost universal opinion in the last century; it is an opinion limited to a few, and these not the most enlightened, in the present century. The other school, which seems to me to be the true one, holds that the millennial era, called millennial from millennium, which means a thousand years, spoken of in this chapter is to be introduced by the personal descent, and manifestation, and present glorious majesty of the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. They hold that the dead in Christ, that is, all Christians who have died, shall instantly be raised in their resurrection robes, the moment the trumpet sounds and Christ appears; that all of us who are living at that day shall be changed, and it is possible, though I cannot

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predict, that some here may never die; that there may be some in every congregation who shall never see death; for we that are alive when the Lord comes shall not die, but we shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, all imperfection shall be eliminated, all sin shall be exhausted; and this humanity of ours, like a glorious shrine, fit for the residence of a glorious and immortal inmate, shall without undergoing the process of decay appear with Christ in glory. It was just to teach this lesson that we find recorded in sacred history that Enoch never died, he was translated; Elijah never died, he too was translated; Moses died, and was raised from the dead, and appeared with Christ on Tabor—that scene that had all the splendour of heaven, but all the transience of a vision upon earth. Moses raised from the dead, and those that were raised when Christ rose from the dead in Arimathea, are the types of the dead in Christ that shall be raised at that day; Enoch and Elijah are the types and the earnests of the living in Christ that shall be changed. The instant, according to this solution—which I believe to be the scriptural and the just one—that Christ comes, the millennial sunshine, like a burst of celestial glory, shall overspread with its intense splendour heaven and earth, and every green sod shall be rolled aside, and every monument of bronze shall be broken, and every marble mausoleum shall crack; and the dead in Christ shall be quickened, and they shall rise, and reign visibly with Christ personally and visibly in the midst of a renovated earth, and a pure air, and a bright sky, for the period of a thousand years.

This being the solution of it that seems to me the most just and consistent, I would try to meet the objections that are said to lie at the very threshold of the solution I have ventured to give. First, it has been objected to this last exposition that the Book of Revelation is figurative, and that this chapter should be regarded as figurative also. I answer, the facts predicted in Revelation are literal; the mode of expressing them is figurative. For instance, in this chapter the great white

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throne, the books being opened, are figurative; but the fact of the judgment is not figurative, but literal, because it is asserted and reasserted in many passages in God's holy Word. We must not confound two things that differ, the mode of expressing a fact and the fact itself: the fact itself may be strictly literal; the mode of expressing that fact may be eminently figurative or metaphorical. It has been objected to the solution that I have given, that those that appear on this occasion and reign with Christ, without entering on the passage itself, are described as souls: "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded." But I need not tell you that the Hebrew word Nephesh, which means *soul*, and the Greek word ψυχη, which means also *soul*, are constantly employed in the Bible to denote persons; in fact, it is the most common thing possible to speak of a number of people as a number of souls. For instance: "Abraham took the souls that were gotten in Haran." In Joshua x. 28: "He utterly destroyed them, and all the souls that were therein." In Exodus xii. 4: "Take a lamb according to the number of the souls;" and so in Nineveh were so many souls. Here you have the word used to denote persons. And I contend that the expression "beheaded" indicates who they were that appeared on this occasion; and being associated with the phrase, "This is the first resurrection," a word that applies not to spirits, but to bodies, it so far settles the question, and proves that it is risen men that appear and reign with Christ a thousand years. Then it has been alleged, in the next place, that the resurrection is delineated in the Gospel, for instance, as simultaneous; and that the idea here of some rising and reigning, and the others remaining in their graves, is incompatible with the express assertion of the Word of God. I answer, there is no evidence of any such thing; because the Gospel speaks of the resurrection, it does not follow that that resurrection may not have two divisions. The doctrine itself is the resurrection of all; but there may be in that act of the resurrection not only a distinction in itself, as I shall afterwards show, but there

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may be also the intervention of a period of time between the one resurrection and the other. I believe, and afterwards I will show, though it is not necessary, that all true believers are raised at the commencement of the thousand years; and that the rest of the dead, the unconverted, unregenerate dead, are raised at the end of the thousand years; and therefore that the interval of a thousand years is between the first resurrection and that which is called the second or last resurrection of the dead. But it is objected by some excellent Christians that it is unreasonable to suppose that the spirits that are happy in heaven should be brought down again to earth to be present there, and to reign with Christ for a thousand years. I answer by asking, what is heaven? I believe with Dr. Chalmers it is not a place, but a condition; I believe with him it is the spirits of believers in a state of perfect happiness, immediately contemplating and seeing Christ; but who can say that there may not be a stratum of such spirits, as it were, above where we now are? I think there is reason to believe, that the spirits of those who have entered into glory are neither unconscious nor ignorant of what is transacting upon earth. But whether conscious or unconscious, it is not necessary to believe that they are materially, geographically remote, but merely that they are conditionally distinct from and superior to the state in which we Christians struggling here now are. Between the people in the crypt of a cathedral, where all is cold, damp, and dark, and the people worshipping upon the floor of the cathedral, there is but the thickness of a flag-stone two or three inches thick; yet the conditions are totally different; and the one has no connection with the other, unless when a door opens, and one ascends, and a flash of the celestial splendour breaks in, and a few notes of the heavenly song are heard; but with that exception the two conditions are perfectly distinct and separate from each other. I have never been able to read otherwise that beautiful allusion in the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; and if I were alone in my interpretation I should hesitate;

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but I find the ablest Greek critics—and one of the ablest is the present Dean of Canterbury, Dean Alford—concur in what I think is its true solution: "Seeing we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses." What is a cloud? It is the effect of the sun's heat that has taken up water or steam from the earth, and fixed it in what seems to us a thick mass, but what is really a body of thin vapour, waiting for the cold wind to touch and to condense it. Seeing we are surrounded by a cloud, a company, of those who have been exhaled or raised from earth by the fervour of the Sun of Righteousness, "let us run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus." The idea unquestionably suggested is that those that we call dead in Christ live, and that they surround us precisely as spectators in an ancient amphitheatre. The ancient amphitheatre was not like a modern theatre in England, a place where the very air is infected, and lighted up with gas, and the dense auditory shut in. It had no roof; the people attended in the daytime; the bright sun and the blue sky hung over them; and the seats of the amphitheatre rose up in successive concentric tiers around, one tier rising above another, till, if we may judge from the remains of one in Rome, twenty, even thirty thousand people could all be seated, the spectators of the scene, on the arena or the floor where the wrestlers wrestled, having thus concentrated upon them some forty or sixty thousand interested and arrested eyes. The idea is drawn from that; and the apostle says, just as on the palæstra or the arena the wrestlers fought, and the spectators gazed upon them, and watched with interest the issue of the conflict, so we on this earth are surrounded by an innumerable cloud of witnesses, who look down upon us, and feel an interest in us, and watch the issue of that grand battle of which they are the spectators, in which immortal souls are the combatants, where also Christ looks, and yearns to see the travail of his soul and be satisfied. It seems to me, therefore, if this be the fact, that there is no degradation in coming down to earth; for where Christ is there heaven is; for

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heaven is less a geographical locality, and more a special presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. I can see, therefore, no loss in their happiness, no degradation incurred, no descent from dignity, in their accompanying him when he comes, and constituting with him that beautiful and glorious bride clad in white robes, without spot, or blemish, or wrinkle, or any such thing; when before the universe of stars, and all their countless tenantry, he shall present her to himself, and bid the universe see from what a depth of woe, from what a taint of character, his precious blood has washed her, what inveterate stains it has expunged, and to what a glory redeeming love has raised its chosen, its happy, and its beloved objects. Nor is this scene peculiar to this passage; for we read in one of the most touching passages of Scripture: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven." If it be no degradation to the Master to descend, why should it be thought degradation for the servants to descend with him? "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we be for ever with the Lord."

It has been objected, in the next place, that there is no evidence that Christ is here personally present. I have said, in giving the second solution of the chapter, that there is reason to believe that the millennium is not the sunshine preceding the sunrise, but the sunshine that follows the sunrise: in other words, that the day does not introduce the sun, but that the sun's rising introduces the day; that the thousand years are not forethrown light followed by Christ's appearance, but the light is reflected from Christ's personal presence. Everybody believes that the Lord will come to this world; everybody believes that he will come again; every one that repeats the Creed, every one that reads his Bible. If there be a dispute, if it is worthy of the name of dispute, when it is really no dispute, but a difference, it is, does he come at the commencement

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or does he come at the close of what are called the thousand years? We can prove from Scripture that when he does come his arrival will be followed by all the events that are predicated of it, as enumerated in the present chapter. For instance, it is stated in Colossians iii. 3: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Does not that look very much like, "And they lived and reigned with him?" We read in 1 Peter i. 7: "That the trial of your faith might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." We find in 1 John iii. 2: "When he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is constantly predicted that when he comes he will not find the earth covered with the glory of a millennium, but "will there be faith upon the earth?" In the "last days men shall be lovers of themselves;" and "as it was in the days of Noah, men were eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage, so will it be when the Son of man cometh." Were he to come at the close of the millennium these predictions would not be applicable. Therefore it appears to me that instead of coming to a world that shall be overspread with the peace and beauty of a millennial sunshine, he will come to a world disturbed, demoralized, and absorbed in material cares—contemptuously asking where is the promise of his coming, without a thought about the soul, religion, or a world to come. We are told that when he appears he will come to judgment; that his presence as Judge is personal; but in this chapter you will find that, without a single additional remark about any subsequent appearing, he ascends the great white throne, and the books are opened, and judgment is pronounced; in short, a fair and impartial reader must come to the conclusion that he is personally present at the beginning of the scene; and that in the end of the chapter and at the close of the scene he merely assumes another attitude on the same level, not descends from a higher, and makes himself manifest in the midst of the world.

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I think it highly probable that the angel who lays hold on Satan and binds him is none else but the Lord Jesus Christ. I need not remind you that he is called by Malachi "the messenger;" and the word "messenger" is simply the translation of the Hebrew Melek, or the Greek αγγελος, which we translate "angel." I am not sure that our translation is always accurate in this rendering; the strict meaning is "a messenger;" that messenger, of course, according to the passage a spiritual or disembodied one, but not necessarily an angel strictly and technically so called. This angel, the angel of the covenant, the messenger of the covenant, in all probability is the Lord Jesus; and when we read that he takes Satan and binds him, and shuts him up, we are reminded of his own words, that he who binds the strong man and spoils his goods is the stronger than he, the Lord Jesus Christ; we are reminded also of his own words, that he has the key of death and of the grave; it is he who opens the pit, and binds Satan and casts him in, where he is shut up for a thousand years. The events recorded in this chapter are preceded by fearful scenes, great wars, the destruction of Babylon, and the consumption of thousands of the hosts of evil; but here we have the rainbow that succeeds the storm, the sunshine that breaks out after the fearful hurricanes that have wasted and swept the earth. We have in this chapter, in short, the midsummer of the world; that beautiful and peaceful June day of a thousand years when the sunshine flows into each bay of earth like a quiet, gentle stream; sleeps upon the roof of every homestead; and all nature takes a long breath after the weary struggle of 6000 years during which she has groaned and travailed, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. There are various passages that seem to justify strongly this identification of the angel with the Lord Jesus. For instance, Peter asked the question, "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have?" Now what does he answer? Jesus answered: "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man

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shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones." Compare this with these words: "And they lived and reigned, and sat on thrones." Here we have the picture reproduced in apocalyptic history which Jesus predicted in Matthew xix. 28. We turn to another passage, which casts light upon it, Acts iii. 19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things." These times are initiated in this chapter; and therefore Christ's presence here we might reasonably expect. Again, in Jude 14, we read: "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints;" and "them that sleep in Christ," says Paul, "will Christ bring with him;" "to execute judgment upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." All these passages clearly imply the personal presence of Christ to inaugurate this new and more glorious dispensation, when the dead in Christ shall be quickened, and the living in Christ shall be changed, and both shall reign with him on earth for a thousand years.

Having given these prefatory remarks, we naturally ask, is there the record of a literal transaction in the first part of the chapter, where it is said, "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit;"—is this to be a literal and actual occurrence? Why should it not be so? I cannot agree with those who always evaporate into metaphor what there seems to be a little difficulty in accepting as fact. This system has been pursued by Dr. Williams, in the second Essay in a volume very

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notorious, in which he has rarefied every doctrine of Christianity into myth, finding in the Bible not facts but figures, and metaphors, and orientalisms. I hold that we ought to take the words of Scripture as literal unless there be valid and conclusive reasons against our doing so. Is Satan here literally laid hold on? In the first place, Satan is not a myth; he is a person, an individuality, a real living power; the archangel not shorn of his strength, and how great that strength may be we know not—nor shorn of his wisdom, and how vast that wisdom may be we faintly apprehend; but deprived of his holiness; wielding his wisdom and his power to ensnare, deceive, and destroy all he can draw within his reach. We have no adequate idea of Satan's power, and we do not sufficiently bear in mind this most awful fact, and it is a very awful one, that a spirit of gigantic energy, of vast wisdom, of inexhaustible resources, is moving upon the earth, entering our homes, our Parliament, our courts of justice, and our gaols; and what is ten thousand times worse, entering our hearts, and there leaving shadows that we cannot scatter; kindling sparks that light up passions we would willingly quench; creating doubts that we abhor; and sending through our hearts thoughts, imaginations, and influences that we have no sympathy with, and over which we must mourn as the irresistible proofs that Satan is not yet bound, but still deceiving the nations of the earth. But what is the evidence that this is a literal transaction? Let me quote language almost identical. In Matthew xiv. 3, I read: "Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison." So we read in this very passage that the angel lays hold on Satan, and binds him, and casts him into the bottomless pit. And as if to show how identical the facts are, the Greek words in Matthew xiv. 3, translated "he laid hold on," "he bound and cast into the pit," are the same as found here. But the treatment of John was a literal fact; John was seized, John was bound, John was cast into prison.

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Why should I suppose that the same language applied to Satan, a person, not a myth, should not be strictly and literally interpreted in the same way? Turn to another part of the same book, and you find in the Apocalypse, the 9th chapter, at the 14th verse: "Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." Here first they have been restrained; next a command goes forth that they are to be loosed. I find the words applied to them also applied to Satan; he is bound, restrained, at the end of the thousand years he is loosed, as we shall afterwards see, and goes out to deceive the nations again. I take it, therefore, that a personal being, Satan, is literally bound and cast into the bottomless pit, and there tormented for a thousand years. But let us look in the light of other Scripture at the word translated here "the bottomless pit;" it is literally "the abyss." We find very similar language used in the 20th chapter, at the 10th verse: "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone;" and again: "Whosoever was not found written in the Lamb's book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Perhaps the bottomless pit is not the same as the lake of fire; for it is literally translated "the abyss;" but he was cast into it; and so earth was rid of his presence. Then it is added: "And set a seal upon him." Is this a literal transaction? Is there anything to illustrate it in actual history? In Daniel vi. 16: "Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet." That was a literal transaction, a strict historical proceeding; why should I not understand the same word used on this occasion to denote the same thing, and this also to be a strict and historical transaction? We read also in the Gospel of the casting of the spirit out of the demoniac—that was a literal fact; and we read of the spirits entering into the abyss—that was a literal fact; and as if

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fallen spirits in the days of our Lord anticipated the judgment that is spoken of in this chapter of the Apocalypse, we read in Luke viii. 31: "And the evil spirits besought Christ that he would not command them to go into the abyss;" the same word, the bottomless pit; and they cried out, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" The bottomless pit into which they were to be cast is that into which their chief archangel, Satan, was to be cast; they knew that such was their doom; but they knew that that doom would not overtake them till the dawn of the millennial era; and therefore they asked, with terrible dismay, "Art thou come here to torment us before the time?" the time fixed by the Father from before the beginning of the world. We understand, therefore, that this binding and expulsion of Satan is a literal casting him out of this world. The change that follows will be transcendently glorious. Suppose sin were not cast out; suppose that our individual sins were not extinguished—and I am not asserting that they will not—the very fact that Satan, with his brood of fallen spirits, is cast out, must be such a relief to this world, such a release to its people, that I can see one half of millennial blessedness accomplished in the casting out of him with whom we have so long and so desperately warred; who "goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," who "deceiveth the nations," and tormenteth them that dwell upon the face of the earth.

Before I conclude this portion of the chapter, let me show you by a parallel which has been given by a very excellent minister in Scotland, the Rev. Horatio Bonar, how every clause in this chapter harmonizes with a distinct text in the New Testament. He draws a line down the middle of the page of his book, and puts upon the one side a clause in this chapter, and upon the other side a text in the New Testament. In the first place—

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"I saw an angel come down from heaven."	Matthew xiv. 41. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend."
2nd. "Having the key of the abyss."	Rev. i. 18. "I have the keys of hell and of death."
3rd. "With a great chain in his hand."	Jude 6. "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."
4th. "He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, and bound him a thousand years."	Mark iii. 27. "No man can enter into a strong man's house, except he will first bind the strong man."
5th. "And cast him into the bottomless pit."	Luke viii. 31. "And they besought him that he would not command them to go into the bottomless pit."
6th. "And shut him up, and set a seal upon him."	Isaiah xxiv. 21. "The Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison."
7th. "That he should deceive the natives no more."	Romans xvi. 20. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."
8th. "After that he must be loosed a little season."	Isaiah xxiv. 22. "After many days shall they be visited."
9th. "I saw thrones."	Daniel vii. 9. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down."
10th. "They sat upon them."	Matthew xix. 28. "Ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
11th. "Judgment was given unto them."	I Corinthians vi. 2, 3. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? Know ye not that we shall judge angels?"

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12th. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God."	Rev. vi. 9. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held."
13th. "They lived."	1 Corinthians xv. 22. "In Christ shall all be made alive." Isaiah xxvi. 19. "Thy dead men shall live."
14th. "And they reigned with Christ a thousand years."	2 Timothy ii. 12. "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Rev. v. 10. "We shall reign on the earth." Rev. xxii. 5. "They shall reign for ever and ever."
15th. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished."	Isaiah xxvi. 14. "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise."
16th. "This is the first resurrection."	Luke xiv. 14. "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."
17th. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."	John v. 29. "They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life."
Lastly. "On such the second death hath no power."	Rev. ii. 11. "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, shall not die any more."

Thus, if we take the whole of this chapter, and set it like a beautiful gem in the centre of surrounding gems, we shall find they all cast light on it, and that it casts light on them.

Then let us comfort our hearts with this blessed hope, that the devil is not to have the mastery; that evil is not to triumph; that Satan is a usurper now, and shall be cast out an exile then; that the Saviour has left us not to forget us, but having engraved our names upon his heart, and upon the palms of his hands, he will come for his bride, that has been crying for so many hundreds of years, "Come, Lord Jesus; take to

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thee thy power; come quickly;" and he will answer, "Behold, I come;" and "the dead in Christ shall rise, and the living in Christ shall be changed;" and "Thou shalt be mine in that day when I make up my jewels;" and all nations shall bless him, and all shall be blessed in him; and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory.

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LECTURE V.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

THEY that sleep in Christ and they that are found alive in Christ at his coming shall, the former rejoin their bodies raised from the grave, and the latter experience a complete transfiguration.

"*I saw thrones and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,*" *&c.* —REVELATION XX. 4, 5.

I PRODUCED in the course of previous remarks the key to the solution of the majestic and sublime chapter from which I have taken the subject of this lecture. I will now comment upon that blessed prospect—that true Easter morning, when there shall take place not the resurrection of a few, as when Christ rose from the dead, but the resurrection of all that sleep in the dust who have died in Christ, and in hope of the glory that he has promised soon and sure to be revealed. Before I advance further, let me explain the peculiar imagery here employed. He says: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them;" that is, I saw fulfilled what God himself has promised by the lips, or rather by the pen, of his servant the prophet Daniel. Daniel predicts what John in this chapter records as taking place at the commencement of that millennial epoch to which all past ages have contributed, and in whose glory and splendour all past times shall be crowned and glorified. Daniel says in the 7th chapter, at the 9th verse: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down;" so John says here: "I saw thrones;" "and," continues Daniel, "the Ancient of days," that is, the Saviour, "did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the

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pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld them because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away; yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like *a*," not *the*, but *a*, "like a Son of man came with the clouds of heaven;" as in the prediction in the 24th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew: "The Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven;" "and they brought him near before him. And there was given him," what is recorded in this very passage, "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." John saw in the distant vision of the future, that passed before him like a splendid panorama, across the Isle of Patmos and over the Ægean Sea, the accomplishment of what Daniel predicted; namely, the thrones set, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them. What a sublime finale to the chequered story of human joys and human sorrows! They that were persecuted and reproached of men at last accepted and acquitted of God—they that were misconstrued on earth, and suffered because of the misconstruction, now glorified and honoured by being placed at the right hand of God—thrones set for them who had known only crosses; joy ministered to the hearts of them that had rarely bounded, and frequently been breaking—dignity the inheritance of those who had been degraded; saints judging the world—men judging angels—all things restored, the glory returned, the church perfect, the bride complete; heaven, the continent of glory, and earth, the long-

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broken-off island, reunited, and made one blessed dwelling-place for ever and for ever. Such is the picture here sketched.

What is worth notice, and what perhaps explains some misapprehensions of the passage, occurs in these words: "I saw thrones, and *they* sat upon them." Who are the *they?* In this sentence, "I saw the souls of them," the words *I saw* are not in the original; they are in our version in italics, and I need not add that is proof there is no original expression for it. The verse runs: "I saw thrones, and they;" the question is, who are the *they?* "they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them;" and in the van of this glorious phalanx, in the forefront of this noble army, were the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus. Who are the *they?* Just that same "*they*" that runs like a silver thread through the whole story of the Apocalypse. You will find the first mention of the *they*, if I may use so strange an expression, in the 7th chapter of this book: "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came *they?*" And what is the answer? Here is the definition of the *they*:—"These are *they* which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are *they* before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." After this read the 4th verse: "And I saw thrones, and *they*," the same *they*, "sat upon them." If we want, again, another explanation of the *they*, let us turn to the 11th chapter, at the 15th verse: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the

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time of the dead, that *they* should be judged." Read also the sequel of the 20th chapter, and you hear the fulfilment of the last echoes of the seventh trumpet: "and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants;" here is the *they;* "the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." This is another picture of the *they* who sat upon thrones. We have the last sketch of the same bright and happy group in the 14th chapter of Revelation, at the 1st verse, the very reading of which is almost like a strain from heaven: "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him"—here are the *they*—"and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; and *they* sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand;" because that song was thanksgiving for spiritual things, which are foolishness to all besides; "but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These"—the same *they*—"these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God." Here you have the picture of the very same *they* that sit upon thrones; that suffered, many of them, for their faithfulness to Christ, and that constitute what are called in the concrete throughout the Apocalypse the bride of the Lamb. She has emerged from the persecutions, the sorrows, the obscurities, of the world; she has laid aside her weeds of widowhood, she has put on her bridal garments, her Easter robes; and now she hears the beautiful, and exquisitely poetical, but though poetical not less true, language of David in the 45th

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Psalm: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy Father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favour. The king's daughter"—now here is the picture of the *they*, of the bride—"the king's daughter is all glorious within;" not by external or gorgeous architectural magnificence, not by ritual, or artistic ceremonies and rites; but morally and spiritually inlaid with that exquisite mosaic, the graces that compose the Christian character and have their birth in the Christian heart. "The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework; the virgins her companions"—the ten virgins, five wise, five foolish—"that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the king's palace," that is, Christ the King. "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations; therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever."

Thus we have before us that holy and glorious group constantly delineated in the Apocalypse, in contrast to those who have apostatized from the truth, and received the mark of the great apostacy of the earth. This church, this bride, this company of living Christians, is traced from the days of Paul through the catacombs of Rome, where their memorials still survive—through the dens and caves of the earth, where their remains are still treasured in the hope of the resurrection morn—along the dens, and rocks, and recesses of the Alps—in Smithfield—on the grey moors of Scotland—wherever the truth has been preached and a martyr for it has suffered—there this bright continuity of Christian witnesses, this true apostolical succession, has constantly appeared, till at last they culminate in the glory of the millennial day, occu-

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pying thrones; having suffered with Christ they also reign with him and rejoice a thousand years, until the vestibule of a thousand years is merged in the grand temple of eternity; and past, and present, and future, are lost in the splendours of one illuminated, everlasting, and glorious now. Such are *they*.

But what is meant by the expression, "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded?" The obvious exegesis of the text is this: John describes, first of all, the whole body; *they*, the bride, the whole company of believers; but, struck with the exceeding splendour and magnificence of the van, he adds, And I saw in the forefront of these, in the van of this great army of the living God, those that had been beheaded; those that had wrestled with superstition; those that had protested against the dominant error; those who had suffered because they would suffer rather than sacrifice to them that were no gods; these occupied the van, more resplendent, but not more worthy, than those that were behind them, that sat upon thrones, and were glorified also with Christ. I have already explained that *soul* is constantly employed in Scripture in the sense of *individual*. For instance, Nineveh, in which are so many souls; Abraham, and the souls that have come with him; meaning the individuals. Of course, if these were souls, spiritually and strictly so called, it is not probable he could see them; as far as we know, our present definition of the spirit of man is that it is invisible; and the very statement there of John that he saw them is evidence that they were not disembodied spirits, but souls in their resurrection robes, raised from the dead, throned in glory, resplendent in a light that is never shaded, and clothed in garments that never perish. They occupied the foremost ranks; the noble army of martyrs, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the glorious company of the apostles, were in the front rank of the church throughout all the world that doth acknowledge and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is stated here that "this is the first resurrection;" it is called here the *first* resurrection. The resurrection

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from the dead is the distinguishing tenet of Christianity itself; and I am persuaded that whilst Christians justly look for the glorification of the soul, and rejoice in that blessed hope, they do not sufficiently realize the equally certain and glorious hope that this very dust now formed fearfully and wonderfully, one day to be decomposed and disintegrated in the grave, shall just as surely as the soul attains its glory experience its resurrection change, and be recomposed, and glorified, and lighted up with all the splendours of heaven; preserving its identity, and yet leaving behind it all the traces of infirmity, mortality, and decay. To show how important is the resurrection, and what a space it occupies in the teaching of the ministers of Christ and in the Word of God, we find that in the early teachings of the apostles it was the dominant theme. For instance, in the room of Judas "must one be ordained to be," what? "to be a witness of his resurrection." Again, the charge against Peter and John in the temple was, "That they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Again, it is said concerning the apostles: "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." At Athens, the metropolis of the world, the university of Europe, the seat of all that was æsthetic in philosophy, art, literature, poetry, music, architecture, science, the charge against the apostle was, what proves it had been his main theme, that "he seemed to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection." Again, we read that when Paul was accused he said: "Concerning the resurrection of the dead I am called in question." And when he wrote to the Corinthians, so important did he regard this truth that he said: "If Christ be not risen from the dead, then is your faith vain, and our preaching is vain, and ye are yet in your sins." Then if we turn back to ancient days, what do we find? Abraham understood the resurrection from the dead; for he accounted that God was able to raise even Isaac from the dead. Again, Joseph believed in the resurrection of the dead;

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if not, why did he give commandment concerning his bones, how they should be taken, and where they should be buried? Job on his eastern plains saw along the vista of many hundred years the resurrection from the dead, and as he beheld the glorious spectacle, he burst into language half prophecy, half poetry, but entirely truth: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet"—scoff as you like, philosopher; despise it and denounce it, Athenian and Sadducee—"yet," saith this patriarch, with a faith, and hope, and earnestness that you do not know, "in my flesh shall I see God." Isaiah knew of this same great truth; for what did he say? "Thy dead men shall live with my dead body;" "the earth shall send forth her dead." David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel, believed it; for did he not sing: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in *hades*," that is, separate from the body; "neither shall thine Holy One see corruption?" The apostle Paul, speaking of the martyrs that preceded him and passed into glory, says: "Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance;" why? "that they might obtain a better resurrection;" he is speaking of Abel, and of Moses, and of Abraham, and of Joseph. And what a suggestive thought is this, that the archangel wrestled, we are told in the Epistle of Jude, about the body of Moses! it is stated in the Epistle of Jude: "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses." This strikes me as suggestive of a blessed thought; over the sleeping dust of the leader of the hosts of Israel, buried in the unknown recess of some mountain fastness in the desert, the archangel watched, lest Satan should disturb it, or in any way interfere with what was redeemed with the same precious blood with which the soul of Moses was redeemed. And if this was so, may it not be true that angels in shining groups are watching by these green sods? that the armies, the marshalled armies of the skies, are looking after the sleeping dust of Christians upon earth? We are so prone to think of the soul—

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and we cannot think too deeply or too feelingly about its destiny—that we forget that every atom of our dust is redeemed with the same precious blood with which every faculty of our souls and every affection of our hearts have been redeemed long ago; and it may be that the same angel spirits that minister to us, the living heirs of salvation, have the charge of that clay which waits for the first burst of the resurrection morn and the first roll of the archangel's trumpet, when this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible incorruptibility; and on that grave where death triumphed, the ransomed, restored, resuscitated, rebuilt frame of mortality shall give utterance to the triumphant, the almost sarcastic song, "O death, where is now thy sting? O grave, where is now thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." Such are some of the constant allusions to that glorious truth, the resurrection from the dead. The immortality of the soul was the almost universal conviction of heathendom; it is so obvious a fact that, like the existence of God, it never was entirely expunged from human hearts; but the resurrection of the body is the peculiar and distinctive doctrine of Christianity; and I fear as Christians we do not think of it frequently enough, or sufficiently rejoice in the blessed prospect which it holds forth.

The resurrection is divided into two parts. All Christians believe there is to be a resurrection of the just and of the unjust; but all Christians do not agree in the order of it; and therefore where we differ we must agree to differ; looking each into his Bible, and forming what seems to him to be the true and just estimate of what is stated there. I believe that when Christ comes, and at the dawn of the resurrection day, all the sleeping dead of six thousand years who loved the Saviour and died in him shall be raised from the dead; and that the dead who have rejected and despised him will not be raised till the thousand years are finished. This is the strict, plain, and historical account in the very chapter on which I am now com-

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menting. John says here: "This is the first resurrection;" and then what does he add? "But the rest of the dead;" what rest? All the glorified, the elect, the justified, the sanctified, the saved, lived, and sat on thrones, and judgment was given them, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years; but "the rest of the dead," that is, those who are not the justified, who are not the ransomed, who are not the chosen, lived not till the thousand years were finished. There are thus two acts in the resurrection. Of one he says: "This is the first resurrection from the dead." If there be a resurrection at all, it cannot be expressed in language more definite, more clear, or more suggestive of the literality of the event. He says of this resurrection: "This is the resurrection;" "that first one." So emphatic are the words in the original that nothing can possibly be more so. Now if the second resurrection be literal, the first must be literal also. If you speak of two things, this is the first, and this is the second, you mean, they differ numerically, but they must be the same materially. If he says of the first, "This is the first resurrection," then if the second resurrection be literal, the first must be literal; if the first be figurative, the second must be figurative, and so there is no resurrection at all, and Job's hope was vain, and Abraham's expectancy was vain, and the hope of all that have fallen asleep in Christ is vain also. Both are literal or both are figurative; you cannot make the one metaphorical and the other material. They are numerically distinguished; but in substance and in nature they must be thoroughly and entirely the same. But does Scripture justify such a distinction? I answer, it does unquestionably. Throughout the whole New Testament—if we turn to all the passages in the New Testament that relate to the resurrection of the dead—we shall find the distinction studiously, and designedly, and sharply kept up. For instance, in Luke xiv. 14: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just;" not at the resurrection, but "at the resurrection of the just." Again, in Luke xx. 35: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that

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world, and the resurrection from the dead;" the words in the original are: "that resurrection, that one;" "they that shall be thought worthy to obtain that resurrection, that first one," to which John refers as the preface to the millennial glory, "neither marry, nor are given in marriage." In that magnificent record of the resurrection which sounds almost like a trumpet peal, the 15th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, we have the order equally clearly explained: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits;" he rose eighteen hundred years ago; then what is next afterwards? "they that are Christ's at his coming;" that is the next event, which includes all believers. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." In that beautiful passage in 1 Thessalonians iv. we read: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Then says the apostle Paul, in another passage equally suggestive of the same thought, Philippians iii. 11: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." What did the apostle mean by that? If it be true that all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth, what could the apostle mean by saying that if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection from the dead? The answer is found in the original of his words; they are, literally rendered, 'the resurrection out of, from amongst the dead." In

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other words, the apostle Paul wished that he might attain, if by any means he could, to that distinct resurrection which John in this chapter speaks of as "the first resurrection from the dead." And it is very remarkable that among the writers of the earliest days, Justin Martyr, who must have almost conversed with the evangelist John, certainly with those who conversed with him—not that I would attach inspired virtue to any such nearness to an apostle; but that he must have known what was the dominant belief on this passage at that day—in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, a most interesting and instructive dialogue, showing that Christ is the Messiah, and what is the belief and what are the hopes of Christians, written before the year 140, probably twenty years after John the Evangelist and writer of the Book of Revelation was dead, says: "I, and all Christians who are in all respects orthodox, know that there will be a resurrection of the flesh, and a thousand years' reign; and Jerusalem will be rebuilt, enlarged, and beautified." Such was the impression of one of the earliest writers after the evangelist John. And what a glorious and a blessed prospect it will be! the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, starting from their graves, glistening like the dew upon the grass, radiant and beautiful as the stars in the sky; constituting together a glorious church, without spot or blemish, or any such thing! Some shall come from the precincts of the Inquisition, from the dungeons of Spain, where so many suffered and were silent, and passed away, because they would not give up the blessed hope of the Gospel of Christ; some shall rise from the caves of Italy, from the snow-drifts of the Cottian Alps, where their bones, in the language of Milton, are still bleaching in the rains and winds of heaven; a glorious group, shining in all the splendours of an immortality that shall know no interruption and experience no decay. Some shall come forth from the village churchyard, the green sod rolling aside to let them rise; and the rude forefathers of the hamlet, that have slept for a

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thousand years, shall meet the buried dead of the catacombs and of the Cottian Alps, and join together in the worship of God and of the Lamb. The great ocean, that sepulchre of buried nations, shall hear quivering through its deepest depths the accents of the Son of man; and rising from the desert and the silent sea—what a spectacle!—shall be myriads of ransomed, redeemed, and glorified ones, who shall meet the rise of that Sun that will never set, and join with those that preceded them, and enter into rest, and sit on thrones, and live and reign with Christ a thousand years. Austerlitz, Jena, Waterloo, Magenta, Balaklava, Inkermann, shall all throw up their buried dead; and every atom of their dust, quickened by the breath of Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, shall feel instinct with immortality; bone shall come to bone, and they shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years. "This is the first resurrection." Blessed thought; glorious prospect; worthy of Christianity to proclaim; meet hope for the heart of every one who has a freehold in a grave, if he have not a foothold anywhere else! Blessed thought; glorious hope; thy brother, thy sister, thy father, thy mother, shall rise again!

This great truth, the resurrection from the dead, was constantly taught by the preachers of Christianity. It is not a fantasy, it is not a dream. I am afraid that we lose half the hope and joy of the glory of heaven by etherealizing it; and no less the hope and joy of the future by losing all impression of it as something that we can see, taste, handle, hear, and feel really happy. Hence the reconstruction of the fallen shrine of mortality is the constant hope of Christians. The future is not the extinction of the body, but its perfection, its glory, and its reconsecration. When the resurrection comes, I shall not be turned into an angel, but I shall be raised a living, responsible man. We shall not be evaporated into something transcendental, ethereal, inappreciable; but we shall be raised with all our living, unextinguished identities, and features, and tastes, and temperament, just as we have them now, sin only

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eliminated, and imperfection dropped as a mortal robe in the grave from which we rise. Christ died for man, not for angels; Christ rose and ascended into heaven the first fruits, not of angels, but of them that slept. He made the body, and eternity will show that Christ has lost nothing that he himself made. The future is not, I repeat, an ethereal, impalpable, imponderable, metaphysical thing, of which we can form no conception, but a new, bright heaven above; a new, beautiful earth below; an enveloping, holy, happy, brilliant, joyous atmosphere around us. They that are there shall retain glorified humanity; that humanity represented in Christ, the first fruits of them that slept. It is men that die; it is men that are raised from the dead. My body is not something that does not belong to me; separate from my body I am not a man. Man is soul and body; angel is spirit alone; if I am not redeemed as a man I am not redeemed at all. It is men that sinned; it is men that are forgiven; it is men that die; it is men that are raised, soul and body and spirit; glorified, immortal, in happiness and bliss for ever and ever. Whatever disease has touched, whatever death has wrestled with, whatever taint of infirmity, imperfection, and decay the fall has left on me, shall all be eliminated and swept away; and I shall recognise the members of my flock, and they will recognise me; and they will remember that I told them these blessed truths; and all will then feel as they do not feel now, what a precious cross, what a blessed Saviour, what a glorious ransom, what a magnificent creed is Christianity! how worthy of being illustrated while we live, and sealed if needs be by our death! that blessed religion that has taught us the immortality of the soul, and its ransom also; the resurrection of the body, and its identity also; all that marks you and me, sin, imperfection, whatever the fall has bequeathed excepted, shall be restored. God did not make our headaches and our heartaches, and our grey hairs, and the crow's feet about the eye, and decay, and deformity, and infirmity; these were all the heritage of sin. Well, all these things will

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be made a present of to the Devil; the Devil shall have for his own all that he accomplished upon earth; and God shall have for his all that he made, and all that Jesus redeemed by his precious blood. And therefore those looks of light, and loveliness, and beauty, that glowed in the countenance of Eve when she came from the plastic hand of her God; and that still linger, as if reluctant to depart, on the countenances of her fairest daughters, shall all be reproduced in sharper, more beautiful, and brilliant relief. Those gleams of thought that, like the waves from the sea, spring up from the depths and fountains of the inner life; those deep feelings for which we can find no language; those flashes of celestial light that rise from the depth we cannot fathom or exhaust; those distinctions, those lights and shadows, all that Adam recognised in his Eve the Second Adam shall recognise in his bride, and perpetuate and fix indelible and glorious for ever and ever. I have no wish, I have not the least wish to be an angel; I wish to be a glorified man. I do not want another body; I shall be content with the one I have, if God will only remove from it all that are the tokens of infirmity and of decay; and blessed be his name, he has promised me and you not another body, but the purification of this; not a re-creation, but a resurrection of that which has been laid down. And hence the very faces that wept on earth I shall recognise radiant with sunshine in heaven; those very nerves that tingled with agony on earth shall vibrate with ecstacy and happiness there; those very tones of voice which raised a melancholy minor upon earth shall sing the anthem peal of Moses and the Lamb. It is that which sleeps that the trumpet stirs; it is that which the grave has received that the resurrection brings forth; it is the prospect of a resurrection, not of a new creation, that is before me. Hence the Christian's sleep is everlasting refreshment; hence the Christian's spirit at this moment, happy up to the measure of its capacity, yet keeps its vigils probably over the green sod where its other half is laid, and waits and yearns

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for that glorious day; and watches and looks if it can see one gleam of the resurrection morn breaking upon the grave, and giving token that death shall be swallowed up in victory, and the grave shall give forth its trophies, and the last enemy shall be destroyed, that is, death. And the Great Watchman of Israel, He that sleepeth not nor slumbereth—be assured of this—is watching over your dead, is taking care of every atom of their dust; and sees with an omniscient eye that never closes; and watches with an omnipresence that cannot be deceived; and waits, in the exercise of an omnipotence that cannot be balked, for that day, the burden of a thousand promises, the object of countless prophecies, when this mortal shall put on immortality, and the crypts of time shall give way to the sunshine and the splendour of the cathedral of eternity; and we shall sit on thrones, and judgment shall be given us, and we shall be assessors with Christ. This is, and it is worthy of the name, that resurrection, that first one.

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LECTURE VI.

THE HOLY AND HAPPY LOT.

BLESSINGS track a believer's steps on earth. Blessings hover over his dead dust like a rainbow. Blessings bright as sunshine on a summer day go with him for ever.

"*Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.*"—REVELATION XX. 6.

IN the first lecture upon this chapter I showed that during the thousand years inaugurated by the era that is here mentioned, Satan, who has deceived the nations of the earth, and is the inspirer of the worst depravity by which the human race is branded, will be laid hold of by the stronger man than he, cast into the abyss, restrained for a thousand years, so that he shall not during that long era go forth to deceive the nations or to delude mankind. And we read that when this event takes place, and Christ himself shall be revealed, that he shall appear in the midst of his ransomed church, fulfilling the prophecy that the sons of God shall be manifested; fulfilling his own prediction that he will present his church, the company of believers, the bride, to himself, a glorious church, without spot or blemish. And he saw thrones: "Ye that have been with me shall in the regeneration sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." "And they sat upon them." Who are *they?* They are not mentioned in the passage that immediately precedes; but they are obviously the *they* we read of so frequently in the Apocalypse: "These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" they are they that are faithful, and chosen, that appear on Mount Zion with the Lamb, and cast their crowns

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before him, and worship him perpetually. These sit upon thrones; judgment is given unto them; and then he says, in the van of this white-robed and glorious group; in the very forefront of this magnificent assembly—assembly such as earth never bore and heaven never before saw—I beheld them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus; that is, the martyrs—those who had not worshipped the great apostacy that has deceived the nations of the earth, nor received its mark, then and there raised from the dead. They who have slept since the days of Adam and Eve, buried under the shadow of the walls of Paradise; and from the days of Abraham and Sarah, buried under the oaks of Mamre; those who are immured in the catacombs of Rome, in the hollows and in the dens and caves of the Alps; under Smithfield; in the grey moors of Scotland; all that nobly lived, and faithfully and trustingly died, shall hear the roll of the last trump. And what a gathering will then be! the great rocks will split; monuments of bronze will be rent in twain; the marble of a thousand years will crack; the green sods will turn aside; battle-fields, from Marathon and Thermopylæ down to Waterloo, and Solferino, and Magenta, shall give up their dead; and the great ocean, the mighty grave in which such myriads are entombed, with only the noise of its waves for their ceaseless requiem, it too shall give up its dead; and they shall reign in glory, in beauty, in happiness with Christ for a thousand years; that thousand years the vestibule before the permanent temple of eternal blessedness and happiness on earth. I showed that all this is to be actualized not in a distant orb, but on this very earth of ours. I think it is altogether a false spirituality that some seem to attach to the Scripture who think, Well, this earth is so bad that the devil had better have it for ever; and it is so corrupt, and so vile—and there is a great deal of course in it that is so—that it is not worth retaining. There is nothing that God has made that shall not be purified and perpetuated in glory and beauty for ever. I do not believe that Satan will have

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a single spoil that is the product of his own wiles; and that the lost that shall be with him will be, as I have often said, suicides, lost because they would not be saved; with Satan because they would not be with Christ. There is nothing, then, we have reason to believe, that God made that Satan shall have. At that day Christ shall have all that is his, and he shall have all the glory of it; and at that day the devil shall get all that is his, and he shall have all the glory, if there be glory, of that. Whatever Satan has introduced, Satan shall have; but whatever God has made and Christ has redeemed, shall be purified, and made beautiful, and ennobled with a greater glory than that which it originally had. It is a very delightful thought now that this old familiar earth, that has so often groaned and travailed in pain, seeking to be delivered from wounds it has not deserved, but which its children have inflicted on it; this earth ever mourning that it is made the ceaseless burial-place of its children; shall one day feel the breath, and hear the accents, and be touched by the consecrating footstep of the Prince of Peace; and when it is restored and regenerated, when all sin is eliminated from it, when all the progeny of sin are driven from it for ever, I do not believe that there will be a planet in the sky or an orb of God's making that will be half so beautiful as this regenerated earth. There is not an orb in the shining sky that is above—and there are millions vastly greater than the earth we dwell on—there is no world amidst the starry hosts, the mere sentinels and outposts of which are all that we can see upon the plains of infinitude, that has in it a Calvary, a Gethsemane, a Mount Tabor, a Mount of Olives; there is not one earth of which it can be said, Jesus drank of its waters, ate of its bread, breathed its air, and its soil was trod by his crucified but sacred feet. And therefore this earth has antecedents, historic associations, blessed reminiscences, that will make it the loveliest, and the most interesting, and the most beautiful of all the orbs of the sky; and I thank God that I was

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born, not in Jupiter, nor in Saturn, nor in Mars, nor in some unfallen orb, but in this fallen, but redeemed, and one day to be regenerated earth.

There is a special blessing pronounced here upon those who have part in the first resurrection. I showed in the course of my previous remarks that there is a twofold act in the same great historic event, the resurrection; that it is irresistibly proved from Scripture that at the commencement of the thousand years, when Christ returns, all the dead in Christ—that is, all dead Christians—shall be raised, and all living Christians then found shall be changed; but the rest of the dead, we are told, lived not till the thousand years were finished; and then we shall find, as I will show you in a subsequent lecture, that they were raised, and who they were. Now, if it be true that they who are raised at the end of the thousand years means they were literally raised from the dead, then the first resurrection must mean a literal resurrection too. Either the first resurrection is literal and the second is literal, or if the first be figurative the second must be figurative, and there is no resurrection at all. But an interval of a thousand years will elapse between the two.

I wish now to ascertain in what sense they can be said to be blessed who share in this first resurrection. I must however add one or two remarks which corroborate what I said in the previous lecture, the certainty and literality of the resurrection from the dead. For instance, we are told in one part: "What; know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost?" not your souls only, but your bodies; and those bodies, consecrated by the residence of the Holy Spirit of God, will be raised again in incorruptibility and immortality. Again, the apostle Paul, comparing Christ's relation to his people to the marriage relation, says, speaking of Christ and the bride, "They two shall be one flesh." But, every Christian is a member of Christ; we are knit to him by ties and bands indissoluble as eternity itself; and if he has risen, as the head, we too shall rise and reign with him in glory Now, if we be temples of the Holy

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Ghost, how can we perish? The Temple of Solomon has passed away like a vision; the more majestic second Temple of Herod is in ruins, or rather is the foundation of the Mosque of Omar; but that temple which the Holy Ghost has chosen and consecrated for his residence may be disintegrated, but it never can be annihilated; every atom of its dust rests in Christ, just as every faculty of our minds and every affection of our hearts is knit to him, never any more to be separated from him. As sure as Jesus rose—and no fact is more certain—so sure your dead shall rise too. The hand that you grasped in affection you shall hold again; the eye that looked on you with its look of sympathy and love shall look on you again; the very tones of voice that were once familiar to your ear shall be reproduced in all their beautiful and affectionate vibrations; the very footsteps that you recognised as the footsteps of your nearest and your dearest you shall recognise again. Identity, recognition, are in my mind as vital elements as the resurrection itself in the Word of God.

Now then the apostle says, or rather he that inspired the apostle says: "Blessed and holy," or, as it might be rendered, "Holy and happy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Read the 5th chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and you will there find that all the beatitudes are pronounced on character. "Blessed are the pure in heart; blessed are the peacemakers; blessed are the poor in spirit;" why? Because in this world an inner satisfaction is the only compensation that we have for outer trouble; the sunshine within lightens the black night that is without; a spring of living water in the Christian's heart freshens the Christian's life, and comforts him in the heat and conflict of Christian warfare. But in that state into which we shall be introduced, and in which we shall be specially blessed, the inner joy and the outer condition will be the same. In this life the lines of nature and the lines of grace cross. each other; in that most happy and blessed state the lines of nature and the lines of grace shall run parallel with each other; and we shall not only have sunshine

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within, but sunshine without; not only a spring of happiness in the heart, but we shall be led to living fountains of waters, and Christ shall wipe away all tears from all eyes. At present many a grace nestles in a Christian's heart that is frostbitten the instant it shows itself outside; but in that better and brighter dispensation the air will repress nothing; the sweet sunshine will woo every Christian blossom; and all brightness and all blessedness without, and all happiness and all holiness within, they shall indeed be blessed and happy that have part in "that resurrection, the first one."

This blessedness and happiness may probably consist in this, that they will then recognise the fulfilment of what Daniel speaks of in words on which I have commented before: "Blessed is he that watcheth, and waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and thirty-five days." They feel the era predicted by Daniel is come; the world's weary six thousand years, they will say, are now all exhausted; the thousand years of blessedness, and holiness, and happiness are begun; and they will feel at that hour as we do not feel now that heaven and earth have passed away; and a new heaven, not another heaven; and a new earth, not another earth, have occupied their place; but not one jot has dropped from a promise, not one letter has fallen from a prophecy, but all has been more than gloriously realized and fulfilled. Another reason perhaps of this blessedness may be and indeed must be this—that in that resurrection the body, long severed from the soul, shall be restored and reunited to it again. We are not angels; we are men. The definition of an angel is spirit alone; the definition of a brute is the body alone; the definition of rational, responsible, redeemed man is soul and body. And those spirits that are now in glory, that state which is a stratum above where we now are, are not yet perfected in all their happiness. Your dead that are with Christ are happy up to the full measure of their capacity; but their happiness will be multiplied and magnified when the dust

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they dropped, as Elijah dropped his mantle when he ascended to the sky, shall be reconsecrated and rebuilt; and the long separated twain shall be one; and the body shall be the meet shrine for the glorified, happy, and the rejoicing spirit. This body is our companion; it is associated with our joys and our sorrows, our tears and our smiles: our sunny days and our sad ones are all connected with this machine, this framework, this companion, this part of myself, which we call the body; we should not like to part with it eternally; it would be a widowhood indeed if it were severed from us for ever; we should be raised as angels, but we should not be raised as men. But our Elder Brother is in heaven, wherever it may now be; with the marks of the wounds on his hands and the reminiscences of Calvary about his brow. Our dust has taken possession of heaven; he has preceded us, a portion of our flesh, the earnest and the pledge that all earth and we that sleep in it shall be redeemed and resuscitated also, and so be for ever with the Lord. It must therefore be an augmentation of the happiness of the redeemed that the body is restored to them. It will be indeed their intensest happiness that they shall see Christ as he is. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." We are told in this very book that John beheld in the midst of the throne a Lamb as if he had been slain. If Christians now say—and many a Christian can say—"Whom having not seen we love"—how marvellous that we can love one who is never seen! "Whom having not seen we love; in whom though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory"—if we can say so now, what shall be our joy, how intense, how full of glory, when we shall no longer believe in the unseen, but shall see the King in his beauty, and the land that is now far off! Each star that he holds in his hand shall shine with unprecedented lustre; each precious stone redeemed by his blood and engraven by his name shall reflect his brightness for ever and for ever. We shall no more see, as we are obliged and pained to

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see now, through a glass darkly. As we cannot look at the sun at noonday through a lens unless it be smoked, or coloured, or dimmed, so we could not as we now are gaze upon the glory of Him, the first flash of whose splendour struck Paul to the ground on his journey to Damascus. But a time comes when our spiritual sight shall be so strengthened and our bodily vision shall be so improved that we shall no more see through a glass darkly; the problems of this dispensation will be the axioms of that; and the obscurities and the difficulties of to-day shall be lost in the brightness and in the glory of to-morrow, and we shall know and see even as we are known. It is a wrong thought to suppose that heaven, or to use a phrase perhaps more strictly scriptural, the future state, is simply ceaseless worship, I mean in its outward expression. I believe that in that future state all those dim discoveries that science now makes we shall see fully; and we shall be amazed as we look back that the loftiest philosopher on earth was ever proud, and we shall see how little the most gifted of mankind now knows—how little reason there is for the most learned to be puffed up; and we shall discover secrets, and mysteries, and glories latent in the universe which will only lead us more to Him who made them all, and redeemed them all by his blood, while we worship Him as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

Another source of happiness in that first resurrection will be that the body thus raised will be no more a clog, or an impediment in the way of what we would do and what we desire to accomplish in that happy and blessed economy. At present, we often find while we read God's word that distracting thoughts dim the eye that reads and touch the heart that beats. How often do you feel weary and exhausted when the mind is unweary and unexhausted; how often do you feel the body to be a weight, instead of being, as it will then be, a wing in your soaring worship before the throne. Nay, do we not feel what an apostle experienced, a law in our body warring against the law of our spirit; so

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that when we would do good, evil is present with us; and the good that we would, from weakness we do not; and the evil that we would not, from weakness we do; and we are constrained to cry in this imperfect economy, "Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Are we not in such circumstances—and I speak to the depths of every Christian's experience when I thus speak—tempted to yearn for the blessedness and happiness of him who shall share in that first and great resurrection? Then that law in our members will be extinguished; then the diverging tendencies will all be put an end to; then the body will be in harmony with the mind. At present the heart, the soul, and the body, are like two instruments out of tune; they are not in harmony; neither in unison nor in harmony. But in that day they will be retuned, and man will be in perfect harmony with himself and others; and we shall find that as men we are capable of greater things and grander things than angels; and that this body, which by reason of sin, and death, and corruption, and mortality, and decay, is now a drag, will then facilitate and help us in executing all the behests that Christ lays upon us, and in rendering that worship of which it is said, "They serve him day and night"—needing no sleep, because there is no fatigue; needing no refreshment, because there is no exhaustion; or, as it is said in another place, in seeming contradiction, but full of beautiful truth: "They rest, and yet they rest not day nor night;" the combination of rest and activity constituting together the worship, the true worship of the child of God.

In that happy state, too, the body shall no more suffer. No cheek shall be the channel of tears there; no trembling hand shall hold the bitter cup reluctantly to the lips; no Shunammite woman as she gazes upon the pale face of her dead infant shall say, while her heart breaks, "It is well." Orphans shall not weep then; no widows shall be there; all tears shall be wiped away. No brow shall be wreathed with thorns; the cypress shall give place to the palm. "Blessed and

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happy is he that hath part in this first resurrection."

We shall then have more than a compensation for all that we have suffered upon earth; and therefore we are cheered to suffer patiently now seeing we shall be recompensed eternally. If needs be you are perhaps in manifold tribulations, but when you stand upon the margin of this ransomed and renovated earth, when in bodies shining with the splendours of immortality, no longer drags and dead weights, but instinct with impulse and energy, you will look back upon all the way you came; and the most afflicted of us all will then not only be constrained, but will be glad to say—Our light affliction, which we felt so heavy and which we thought so long, has worked out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory; and what the apostle says in the 8th of Romans, and what we feel so imperfectly now—I reckon that this present suffering, I reckon that that past suffering, was not worthy to be compared with the glory which has been revealed. Then we shall hear the address, "Come, ye blessed;" and the instant we hear these words, pains will cease to rack, and sickness will cease to waste; they that have risen and reign with Christ have met there to part no more; there will be no graves, no death, no sickness, no sorrow; this earth will be a beautiful, a holy, and a happy abode of perfect, and glorious, and happy, and holy men.

It is a blessed thought to look forward to that day, that sure and certain day, when all the traces of battle-fields, those frightful scars upon the earth, shall be effaced for ever; when graves, the furrows that are made by the ploughshare of death, shall be filled up for ever; when the cries and groans of creation, mourning, and longing, and striving to be delivered, shall all cease; when there shall be no night, the season of misunderstanding, of misapprehension, of uncertainty, and danger; when the curse that, like a stain of ink upon the sensitive blotting-paper, has radiated over all the surface of nature, and struck down to its very heart, shall be exchanged for the blessing; when the

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glory of Lebanon shall be brought unto it; when the lion and the lamb shall lie down together; when there shall be a thousand years of sabbath sweetness, sabbath blessedness, sabbath joy, without sabbath clouds, or sabbath interruptions, or sabbath weariness or fatigue; when there shall be the recognition of all that we have known on earth! I look upon it as one of the brightest hopes of Christianity that those we loved on earth, from whose lips dropped lessons of wisdom; whose footprints upon the sands of time still shine with imperishable excellency; we shall meet, and know, and recognize again. There is not a mother that has lost a babe that will not meet her babe and recognize it again in that pure, and beautiful, and holy light which never shall be shaded. Very sweetly does Longfellow sing of this very subject when he says:—

"There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there;
There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But hath one vacant chair.

"The air is full of farewells to the dying,
And mournings for the dead;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted.

"Let us be patient; those severe afflictions
Not from the ground arise;
But oftentimes celestial benedictions
Assume this dark disguise.

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapours,
Amid these earthly damps;
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps.

"There is no death; what seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call death."

This shall be realized in all its blessedness and comfort then. I think it would take away half the charm of the future if we were to be in it like monks and nuns, shut up in stone and lonely cells; a father, a brother, a sister, a babe, be near you, and yet you to

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be insensible to their presence, or ignorant it is the familiar and the once-beloved face. The promised future is not a series of cold, insulated cells; but our Father's house. "In my Father's house are many," not cells, but "mansions." It is amid the warmth of his fireside that we shall gather; it is under that roof-tree that never shall be broken that we shall meet; and as sure as we gather round our Father's fireside and beneath our Father's roof-tree, shall I recognize and know all my brothers and my sisters in Christ, when we sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of our Father.

Then surely holy and happy is he that hath part in this first resurrection. No thorn will be about the brow; no moth will fret those shining and beautiful robes; time will leave no snows upon the hair, and it will grave no wrinkles upon the brow. There will be no sere leaves then on earth, the bequests of preceding years, and there will be no dead leaves on the soil of thought, in the garden of the heart, that we should not wish to be there; all things shall be made new; no frost shall nip the blossoms, and no shadow shall fall upon the sunshine; and the years of eternity, like the hours on the sun-dial, will be measured by sunshine, and not by shadow.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in this first resurrection." O Lord, may we be numbered with these thy saints in glory everlasting, for Christ's sake! Amen.

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LECTURE VII.

REIGNING PRIESTS.

GLORY follows glory as we read the future of the sons of God. So brilliant a destiny should animate our fainting hearts, and strengthen our feeble knees as heirs of God, for—

> "*On such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.*"—REVELATION XX. 6.

I HAVE explained the blessedness—and it is a great blessedness—of those who have part in this first resurrection. I know that if I speak to mere secular, and worldly, and unthoughtful minds on these subjects, it gives them matter only of infinite merriment; they will only deride or sneer at it. But you may rest assured that what God has thought it right to inspire, that ambassador is unworthy of the name who thinks it not right to try to teach and explain. The mission of a minister of Christ is not that of a person who is to please the taste, gratify the appetite, indulge the notions, of a world that is thoughtless; but of one who has to speak the truth, and the whole truth, as that truth is unfolded from the first verse of Genesis to the last verse of the Apocalypse. And I am sure that Christian minds, I not only think and hope, but I know, weary with the toils of the week, fretted with its disappointments, and sick of its troubles, its aches, and its sorrows, rejoice to get a glimpse of heaven's sweet sunshine amidst the shadows of the present; to sip a little from the fountain of living waters on the plains of this world's parched and fevered desert; and surely, surely, if Christianity be not simply a directory for man's walk, but as we believe and are persuaded it is, a shower of bless-

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ings, a burst of sunshine, to make men not simply holier, but to leave them happier in this present world; then I feel that in ministering to the happiness of men I am serving God as much as when I minister to their holiness. I have ever tried to teach and to persuade, and I am sure I am right, that this blessed religion of ours makes men happy; and. I have tried to adduce and to bring forth from the page of sacred writ those grand truths that are fitted to waken in the heart's strings music, the very music of the skies; and in trying to make men happier, and in the consciousness that some are made happier, I feel my reward in my work, and am encouraged to persist in teaching those grand lessons, in impressing those bright hopes, in gathering those handfuls of sunshine in order to make you happy in this world as well as holy. When I think that we address on Sundays hundreds who are toiling all the week from early in the morning to late at night, who hear ceaselessly the sound of pence, and shillings, and pounds; who are struggling to make ends meet, and have a difficulty in doing it; who are disappointed here, and balked there, and cheated elsewhere; and worried, and vexed, and tormented, and troubled for six days; let us shut the door on the world's troubles on that beautiful day, the queen of the days of the week, the Christian sabbath; and let us look into the sunshine, and try to hear unspent celestial music; and to meditate together upon themes that will strengthen us to go into the valley of the week, having been on the sunny mount, the Tabor of the Sabbath, in communion with Christ and with all that bear the name of Christ Jesus.

It is, then, a blessed thought if you and I shall be numbered in the first resurrection, for the second death shall have no power over us. What is this second death? What does it mean? When God told Adam the consequence of his sin he said: "In the day thou eatest thereof," literally, "Dying thou shalt die." Every one has understood that to mean death in its most comprehensive shape; and its comprehensive shape is threefold: death physical, death moral, death

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eternal. In its physical shape I need not try to teach its certainty; the young, the good, the beautiful, die daily. The long procession of the dying began at the gates of Paradise lost, and it will go on dark and gloomy till the gates open of Paradise returned and restored. Few families are without one sad reminiscence at Christmas eve; few firesides are without one empty chair; but, glorious thought! those memories of yours, that like picture-galleries have stored in them the paintings and likenesses of them that are gone, shall not surrender those likenesses until the originals return, and you shall see and know even as you are seen and known. The second death is in its first aspect what we all must experience, physical; with this distinction, however, that in the case of a Christian the venom of death is gone; that is to say, he dies; but he only changes the crypt for the cathedral; this cold world for yon bright and beautiful one; and death to him is not dying; there is no penalty in his sufferings, but only chastisement; there is no curse in his death, but only transference; for death in his case has lost its sting, and the grave is denuded of its victory. This death includes in the original sentence what we call spiritual death. What is spiritual death? It is the soul living on the lower plane of this world, but insensible to the great things and the grand things of a higher. For instance, the man whose soul is spiritually dead is alive to literature, alive to politics, alive to science, alive to all the questions and the criticisms of taste; but his soul is so dead to the things of the higher world that if you speak to him about regeneration, about the righteousness of Christ, about the atonement, about heaven or the resurrection, he will turn round to his neighbour and he will ask, "Doth he not speak parables?" What does he mean? He is a mystic, he is a transcendentalist; we do not understand these things; if he had told us not to pick pockets, or if he had told us not to defame our neighbour, we could have understood that; but when he speaks of those things that belong to another realm, those higher truths that touch the inner part of Chris-

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tianity, then all is mystery. Why? Because his soul is dead. Just as a man who is dead does not see, I mean as far as his body is concerned, the room in which his body lies, so a man whose soul is dead does not see the spiritual truths, the great lessons, the bright hopes, the blessed sympathies, the inner and upper world amid which he is placed in the church of Christ. We have evidence of this natural death being reversed, when Lazarus rose from the dead, and multitudes rose with Christ; and we have evidence of this spiritual death being reversed in increasing thousands who are regenerated, and translated from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan into the power of God. There is, thirdly, as the last aspect of this second death, the suffering, or destruction, if I may use the word, of soul and body in hell for ever. This is in its strictest and most absolute sense the second death. The body is not annihilated in the grave when it dies; so the soul is not annihilated in the second death when it dies. Annihilation is not only an impossibility, but scientifically looked at it is an absurdity. Your body never can be annihilated, and so your soul never can be annihilated. Your body may be dissolved, and be disintegrated, and mixed up with a thousand forms, but there it is; the soul may be spiritually dead, spiritually miserable, spiritually wretched, spiritually unhappy, but annihilated the soul never, never can be. And all the language that is employed in Scripture to denote this second death seems to me inexplicable, unless upon the assumption or admission, painful and awful as it is, that the souls of some—God forbid it may be any of us!—shall suffer for ever and ever. What can I make of such words as these? I appeal to you: "Some shall go into outer darkness; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." What can I make of these words: "The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather together all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into outer darkness?" I have often said, what I now repeat, that the only difficulty I feel in the Bible, and

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the only one that the old Adam sometimes strives and struggles against, is this—that when all shall be reclaimed, when this earth of ours shall be restored; when the reign of beauty, of blessedness, of happiness, of sunshine, of joy, and of peace, shall overspread the universe like a glorious and an unfathomable ocean, there shall be somewhere—where I know not—a place in which shall be heard the wail of a ceaseless sorrow, and where shall be the victims of an inexhaustible calamity. My own feelings are so against it that I have striven—perhaps I have done wrong—to gather from the Bible that it is not true. I have read all that the Essayists have said, one of whom, Mr. Wilson, professes to deny it; I have read much that the Universalists of America have written in their best and most celebrated works, but I cannot get over what God in his word has said. I would reject it, I would refuse it, I would disbelieve it, if I could; but the God of patience, of mercy, and of love, who gave Christ to die for us, has settled it. I am a Protestant; my creed, or my conviction, is not what my passions, or prejudices, or sympathies, or fallen nature prescribe, but what God has said; for when He has spoken all controversy is for ever settled. And therefore I must believe that when all shall be restored, when in the experience of those that reign with the Lamb, that sit on thrones, that share his greatness, that cast their crowns before him and worship him—when there shall be no more sickness, nor sorrow, nor tears, nor death—somewhere there will be, invisible to us, a cloud amid the sunshine; inaudible to us, a discord in the universal harmony, a spot of sorrow and of woe, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; for the very same word that metes out the blessedness of the saved also metes out the misery of the lost. "These shall go away into everlasting life," αιωνιον; "and those shall go away into everlasting punishment;" not annihilation, but punishment. I am therefore driven to the conclusion that this second death means exactly what I have now stated, of ceaseless and inexhaustible punishment. But

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what is the use of ingenious men trying to dissolve in their own prepossession God's plain word? There are gaols and prisons in England, but you need not go into them. Nobody, as you pass along Newgate Street, drives you into Newgate gaol; nobody sends you to Bridewell; you need not enter into any one of them. There they are; they are for those that have fitted themselves for them; but you need not go there. Is it not much better to inculcate the holiness, the happiness, the privileges, the joys of integrity and honesty, than it is to try and teach that a cell in Newgate is not so narrow nor cramped, and that Newgate has not so bad food, and that the gaolers are not so hard-hearted, and that the punishment of a prison is not so bad? What is the use of this sort of teaching? Is it not common sense to teach every man that you need not go there; you cannot go there against your own will; and if you go there you go because you will, and no force, not even royalty itself, can send a man to prison who does not wilfully and deliberately do what entitles him to a cell within that prison? So, with respect to teaching men that hell exhausts itself, and wears itself out, and that if you go there, there is sure to be an end of it, and therefore you need not be alarmed, nor care much about the matter; what wretched theology is that! Why, I would not escape hell from the fear of hell; and I should not care about going to heaven simply to be rewarded for what I have done; if the love of God be in my heart, the love of him who loved me, the love of him who gave Christ to die for me, the love of him who has inspired the Bible to teach me, the love of him who has lighted up heaven with all its splendour to receive me—that is my inducement to follow him, and to shrink instinctively and intuitively from all that is inconsistent with his will, his word, and the requirements of his law. But, if you be Christians, finally upon this head, on you the second death hath no power. We have nothing to do, therefore, with preaching about hell. I do

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not believe that any man is driven into heaven by being scared from going into hell; I do not believe you will ever make a Christian by telling him about the torments of the damned; I do not think it is our mission to preach them; we have nothing to do with them. If you are not made Christians by the overwhelming pressure of God's infinite love in the gift of Christ Jesus our Saviour, you will never be made Christians at all. There is no Christianity in any human heart that is not the product of the sight and appreciation of God's infinite love in the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. And therefore, having noticed it because it comes before me in this passage, I pass on from it, reminding you that if you accept the salvation freely offered, if you believe on the Saviour plainly set forth, not a spark of that fire can singe a hair of your heads; not an element of that second death can touch you; not a worm in it can gnaw your happiness; not a moth in it can fret your peace; you have nothing to do with it; you are redeemed, you are justified, you are sanctified; you are marching from grace to glory, and from the low levels of this world on which sin has laid you as wrecks to the high and sunny table-land where there is peace and blessedness for ever. The anxious thing I sometimes think of, and pardon me for adding it, is—whether when we find ourselves in glory and with Christ in millennial blessedness we shall miss any that we loved and took sweet counsel with upon earth. If that be possible, that we shall miss them—and if we do not find them there we must miss them—would there not be a tear dropped upon the pavements of heaven? would there not be an agony that would pierce even a happy and a bounding heart? I cannot explain it; I leave it; I know that heaven will be infinite happiness to the redeemed, and there will not be one tear, one sorrow, one distress; but how to meet the question I have suggested, or to solve the problem, God knows best; I do not; and therefore I will not attempt to do it.

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Then it is told us that those on whom the second death will have no power shall be priests, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years. Mark the two words, they shall reign, and they shall be priests; or as it is rendered in another passage: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and unto Christ." Here is the dignity of those that enjoy that first resurrection; they are, yes, you are, kings and priests now in disguise. The poorest beggar woman who is a Christian, the poorest old man who is a Christian, is a queen, and a king, and a priest unto our God and to his Christ. We are now the blood royal, but we are in disguise; in the language of Scripture, our life is hid with Christ in God. We can see the life and the dignity of those that occupy and tread the high and mighty places of the land in which we live; but we cannot see, because it is spiritually discerned, the dignity—in reversion it may be, but substantially in possession it now is—of those that are kings and priests unto God. But at that day when they shall be raised again, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and they shall reign with Christ a thousand years, the cloud that envelops them shall be dispersed, the darkness that overshadows them shall be dissolved; in the language of the Gospel, the sons of God shall be made manifest; the bride shall emerge from the low, and dark, and damp place where her sojourning has been for many thousand years, and put on her bridal raiment, her coronation robes, and shine as the brightness of the sun and as the stars for ever and ever. They shall appear at that day, all God's kings and all God's priests, with a splendour and in a glory in comparison of which the royalty of Alexander the Macedonian and the magnificence of Napoleon shall be but a spangle on a noble's robe. All shall pale and sink into insignificance beside that grandeur of which you, poor people—you, despised and downtrodden ones; you, in this world destitute, but in the hopes of that world rich—shall be partakers and heirs for ever and ever. And when these

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kings shall appear, too, theirs will be crowns that shall not fade, theirs shall be sceptres that shall not be broken. They will not be, like poor Louis Philippe, citizen kings put up by the mob, and pulled down by the mob when its passions change; they will be kings and priests unto our God and to his Christ. All that is beautiful in aspect, all that is precious in its intrinsic nature, all that is quickening and joyous, shall be theirs in that house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. That Christians are now kings is plain; for does not Peter say? "Ye," speaking to poor, persecuted, depressed Christians scattered throughout the world, "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." What is a royal priesthood? Kings and priests. So that Christians, whilst they will be in the first resurrection manifested as such, are in this economy not manifested, but really and truly such: Ye are kings and priests. But if you be kings unto our God, you must have a retinue; royalty has its retinue. You do not see it; I do not see it; but just as the servant of Elijah saw nothing till his master opened his eyes, and then he saw shining troops of chariots and of horses that were encamped round about him; so if we had the spiritual vision we should see angels and archangels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, encompassing us, and interested in us; watching over the issues of a conflict on which two eternities depend. Michael the archangel disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. It strikes me as a just inference from this, that angels not only minister to Christians now, but that they watch over and take care of their dead dust. And if our eyes were opened by a higher than Elijah, and if we saw as Elijah's servant was enabled to see, ever as we entered what the Germans call very beautifully "God's acre," that is, the cemetery, the burial-place of the dead, we should see troops of shining angels watching over every green sod, waiting and looking towards the sunrise, if they can catch the gleams of the approaching resurrection sunshine; listening perhaps if they can

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hear the first trumpet tones of the resurrection morn; and, oh beautiful thought! oh comforting impression for those who have the dust of their loved ones sleeping in many a churchyard! watching over that dead dust; and were Satan to come and try to seize it as his own, Michael the archangel is there to resist him. I often feel that there may be conflicts between higher powers in our present world, far more gigantic and momentous than we in our material notions are sometimes disposed to admit. We may be in the midst of grander spectators, we may be the subjects of eyes and of an inspection more penetrating than we sometimes are disposed to think. And perhaps as this dispensation draws nearer to the first resurrection, the veil will be withdrawn; the partition wall will become thinner; and we may hear the voices and see the flash of the splendour of a higher, a brighter, and a nobler world; and by the earnest and the foretaste feel that the millennial rest is not a dream, nor a fantasy, as some silly and stupid writers that do not understand it sometimes teach, but a blessed hope, a glorious expectation, a quickening theme, worthy of ministers preaching and of people listening to. We shall be kings; we shall reign with Christ.

But it is added, we shall also be priests. What does this mean? What is a priest? The important practical lesson I cannot too frequently inculcate, that the humblest Christian is as much a priest as the Pope of Rome or the Archbishop of Canterbury. The minister of the Gospel is nowhere called throughout the New Testament as an officer a priest. I remember once having a discussion with a Roman Catholic priest, and I offered him five hundred pounds if he would only bring forward from the New Testament one single text in which the minister of the Gospel, the ambassador of Christ, is called ἱερευς, a sacrificing priest; and he admitted that the New Testament did not teach it; but he said he had what was much better, tradition; however, as we do not think tradition much better, we are satisfied with the silence of the New Testament

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as evidence that no such officer is in existence. But, above all, how thankful we should be that we do not want such an officer! Suppose there were such officers in existence as sacrificing priests, what are they to do? We have no atoning sacrifice to offer; it was finished 1800 years ago; we have nothing for a sacrificing priest to do; a sacrificing priest has no more to do in administering the communion than a colonel of a regiment or a captain of dragoons. We do not want such an officer; there is nothing for him to do; the man's office would be a sinecure, because the sacrifice is finished and the pardon is offered; and the Lord's Supper is the feast after the sacrifice, not the sacrifice itself in any sense whatever. But then we are told that whilst the minister of the Gospel is not a priest in that sense, yet all Christians are priests: "Ye are a royal priesthood;" "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God." Then what do we offer? Not an atoning sacrifice. All the tears that penitents can shed are no atonement; all the pains and agonies that devotion can endure are no atonement. You are priests, my brethren, but you are not called upon to offer a sacrificial victim. Then what are you to offer? The same book that tells us of the priesthood tells us what its offering is: "To do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices"—now it is priests that offer sacrifices—"with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Again: "I beseech you by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies living sacrifices;" and again: "the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." In other words, we as Christian priests offer to God not atonement, but eucharistic sacrifices; that is, thanksgiving sacrifices. And thus as priests we offer up sacrifices. But if there be priests and sacrifices, there must be an altar. What is that altar? for it is the altar that sanctifies the offering. What altar? It is not a stone one, nor a brick one, wooden one: "we have an altar of which they

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have no right to eat that serve the sanctuary; Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Therefore when you retire from the house of God, and put a penny, or a shilling, or a pound in the plate for the aged poor, you do a priestly act; you lay it upon the altar, it is in the name of Christ you offer it; be it a halfpenny, be it what you like, it is a priestly act; you give it in Christ's name; or, translated into other words, you lay it upon the altar. When you do good, or visit the schools of the poor, when you minister to the needy, or give to missions, or aid the circulation of the Bible, you act as priests, and in doing these things you do priestly deeds. What a grandeur and sublimity does this give to the meanest offering that a Christian can present! In that day, that day when the priest shall be manifested; that day when the crown and the mitre shall be upon the same head; when the sceptre and the pastoral staff shall be in the same hand; when we shall be kings and priests, a royal priesthood unto our God—what shall we offer? We shall bring the loveliest flowers; and oh, how beautiful will the flowers be of a regenerated earth! and the richest fruits, and the rarest produce of the ground, in comparison of which the blighted flowers that Cain gathered under the shadow of the walls of Paradise were as nothing; and these sweet flowers and those rare fruits we, the priests of creation, shall offer unto Him that redeemed us; and we will say to him: Blessed Lord, thou Priest of priests, thou King of kings, these sweet flowers have derived their exquisite tints from thy look; these fragrant flowers have derived their perfume from thy breath; these rich fruits have been ripened in thy smiles; we, priests, redeemed by thy blood, and standing before thy throne, offer them to thee as creation's first fruits, restored, regenerated by thee, to which we are priests, offering all its produce to thee; for thine is the praise, thine the kingdom, and thine the glory. And we will offer ourselves for his service, and all our gifts for his glory, and all we are to his praise; and we shall take our crowns

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and our mitres, our sceptres and our pastoral staffs; all the insignia of priesthood, all the crowns of royalty, and we shall cast them in gleaming showers at his footstool, and we shall say as priests: "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and riches, and glory, and power, and dominion; for he hath made us kings and priests unto our God; and we shall reign with him for ever and ever!"

Oh glorious hope! re-creation is no myth, any more than creation; resurrection is no myth, any more than regeneration. All that sin injured shall be repaired; on this very earth, under these bright stars, that the mists, and damps, and vapours of sin have not touched, you and I shall meet again—blessed thought! and constitute a congregation, and surround a communion-table, where the palm-tree takes the place of the cypress; where the anthem peal of joy takes the place of the melancholy minor wail of creation; where all tears shall be wiped away; where all doubts shall be dissolved; where we shall never be faint and weary in listening, or in reading, or in praising; where this poor body of ours shall be no more a drag, no more a dead, heavy weight; no more an interruption; but a ministry of energy, of effort, and success. Oh glorious day!

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys when shall I see?"

In the sweet words of an old Scottish writer among the Covenanters:—

"Ah! my sweet home, Jerusalem,
Would God I were with thee;
Would God my woes were at an end,
Thy joys that I might see.

"The saints are crowned with glory great,
They see thee face to face;
They triumph still, they still rejoice,
Most happy is their case.

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"For them they come in such delight,
Such pleasure and such play,
As that to them the thousand years
Do seem as yesterday.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
When shall I come to thee?
When shall my sorrows have an end?
Would God I were with thee."

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LECTURE VIII.

SOUL AND BODY.

"*This is the first resurrection,*" *&c.*—REVELATION XX. 5, 6.

I WILL try to show you the certainty and glory of the fruits of the resurrection in what is here called the resurrection of "them who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God; and who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection." I need not repeat that this chapter is the epitome of what are called the millennial blessings, or the joys of the age that is yet to be. It is after all opposition has been destroyed; after Christ has returned to the world over which sin has reigned so long, that the seer, witnessing a grand panorama, the successive scenes of which sweep before his eye, and reveal to him new facts and phenomena, says that after this he beheld an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the abyss, that is, the place into which Satan and sin shall be ultimately cast; and the symbol of restricted power, a great chain in his hand; and he laid hold upon the dragon, that is one of his titles, or the old serpent, whose subtilty in Paradise seduced Eve; who is the Devil, or the accuser of the brethren, or Satan; all his names combined; and bound him for a thousand years. We can see at once that the binding of Satan for a thousand years will be in the first place a great relief to this world; just as his presence in this world must be a ceaseless, disturbing cause, to which is to be traced the authorship of the worst crimes that debase and deform mankind. He

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is said to have cast him into his own place. Where is Satan now? Not everywhere; but going about, which indicates change of locality, and therefore the absence of omnipresence; going about on the earth seeking whom he may destroy. He is taken at the advent of this new era and cast into the bottomless pit, shut up and sealed, that he should deceive the nations no more, what has been his only pleasure for eighteen centuries and upwards, until the thousand years are fulfilled. Afterwards occurs, what is the most mysterious and difficult part of this book, that he is to be loosed for a little; those who are the enemies of God are to come from the four quarters of the earth to make an attack upon the camp of the people of God, and to be destroyed. Then the millennium, like the dawn of the morning, is to break into the full-orbed sunshine of everlasting day; no disturbing, no disruptive elements being admissible; no more tears, nor crying, nor sorrow; a new heaven and a new earth, and all things made new; joy for ever dwelling therein like a rainbow round a fountain of righteousness. Then says John, I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and judgment was given to them. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels? and ye shall sit with me on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" the very promise of our Lord. "And judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God;" that was for their faithfulness in testifying to Christ; "and which had not worshipped the beast," that is, the great Western Apostacy, "neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads;" but were, in other words, Protestants; "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not," that is, their dead bodies were not raised, "until the thousand years were finished." This first one that he has referred to is the first resurrection. And then, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in this first resurrection."

I wish to show here that there are two distinct acts

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in the great drama, if I may use the expression, of the resurrection—one which takes place at the commencement of the millennial day, and the other which takes place immediately at its close. Before I proceed to this, however, let me state what I believe, as indeed I can prove, that now, whilst the body is mouldering in the grave, where the soul of the Christian has left it, to be prepared and made ready for that soul when it comes back again in all its glory and its perfection, the soul that has left it enters instantly into all the happiness and joy of which it is capable. The present state of the souls of believers is not their full joy; that will be when soul and body are united together. And hence throughout the whole Scripture the souls of believers in heaven are represented as in a state of waiting or expectancy for the extrication of their dead dust from the grave, and for its being rebuilt a glorious shrine, a meet home for the glorified spirit that is to dwell in it for ever and ever. In touching words this truth is portrayed in the Epistle to the Thessalonians; where we learn that the soul of the believer is in perfect and conscious happiness, from the distinct statement of God. But we have the means and elements of such a conviction in some degree in our own experience. The soul often acts with greater intensity when it disentangles itself from its material tenement. I am absorbed one day in thought; a topic that intensely delights me is subjected to the investigation and analysis of my mind. I am so absorbed in pursuing the theme I love that the clock strikes, persons enter the room and go out again, music is heard upon the streets, the beat of many feet is echoed from the pavement; all noises and sounds transpire around me that in ordinary circumstances would disturb me; I have not heard a sound. Why? how so? The ears were shut, the senses were in abeyance, the soul had drawn in its tides from the outer shores. Disentangled thus from the complications of all outward action, it thought with the greatest intensity, and lived and acted with the completest and most thorough consciousness. Is not this

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so far a proof that the soul becomes vigorous in proportion as it lets go its hold of the body; that the less it is fettered by its earthly tenement the more intense, the more keen, the more powerful it becomes; as if to teach us in this world that the soul separate from the body is not in a state of unconsciousness, but that then it begins its nobler life, puts forth its grandest powers; and is capable of worship, and of adoration, and of study, and of thought, separate from the body, of which it is altogether incapable in this present economy. It will only be able to regain its highest glory and power when the body, purified, glorified, and risen, shall be worthy of so kingly an inhabitant to abide in it for ever and ever. Hence I have always felt what I think is most comforting to Christians, that in no case is the soul ever injured upon earth. In the condition of the veriest idiot, or of the most thorough lunatic, the soul in its innermost sanctuary remains perfect, unmutilated, and were it free, capable of grand imaginings, as was the soul of Newton, or of Shakspeare, or of Milton. Then it will be asked, How do you account for the humiliating spectacle presented by either of these? I would try to explain it this way. My feet, let me suppose, are paralyzed, but the soul is not touched; my hands are next paralyzed, but still the soul is not touched. A step further, my brain, which is a still more important organ, is paralyzed, or pressed upon, but yet my soul is not touched. But you say, I am incapable when the brain is pressed upon of thinking, at least of speaking, acting, writing, in the way I was accustomed to do before—how will you meet this? It is not the soul that has undergone a change, but the outward hand of the soul, which we call the brain, that will not respond to its volitions. When you see a man paralyzed in the hand, he has lost the power of writing, but his skill is the same it ever was; his own idea of what should be, and his desire to accomplish what he means, is as perfect as ever. Then what has gone wrong? The nerves and muscles of the hand which is the instrument will not respond, because they are weak. And

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so in the case of the lunatic, when he does not appear as he did before; when he is incapable of those deeds, thoughts, conceptions, as far as we can see them, by which he was marked before, we shall find it is not his soul that is decayed, but it is the organ through which it acts that has suffered injury. Place the noblest minstrel that the sun ever shone upon beside a harp whose strings are broken or out of tune; he strikes the vibrating chord, but he brings forth no sweet music. Why? He has not parted with his skill, nor lost his genius; but the instrument by which he expresses what he knows has lost its power of giving utterance to them. In the same manner, when a person becomes what is called a lunatic, it is not the soul that has gone wrong; but the instrument of many strings, so exquisitely toned when perfect, so liable to go wrong in the wear, and tear, and pressure of an overwhelming world, that will not convey to the outer ear the thoughts, imaginations, and conceptions of the soul. I have often felt this when I have seen persons do what is very cruel—tease a lunatic or an idiot; I have always had the impression that the poor man had just as bright thoughts as I have, as clear conceptions of what was right to do, but he could not express them, he could not carry them out; the birth of the thoughts was complete; their development in the outer world faltered and failed ever as he made the attempt. It is not the soul, again I repeat, that is gone wrong; but it is the outward machinery through which it speaks. November darkness, of which we have so full experience in London, is not the extinction of the sun, but the intervention of a fog; an eclipse is not the extinction of the moon, but only the shadow of the earth upon it. So insanity, paralysis, and sickness, are not accidents of the soul, but diseases of the house in which the soul lives, in consequence of which it cannot act upon the world with which it is made to come into contact. Hence let the fog dissolve, and the sun comes forth in November as bright and pure as in June; let the earth move on, and the moon's disc is as bright and beautiful as before; let health be

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restored to the body, and he that was pronounced a lunatic may be among the wisest and the most accomplished of men. Do not therefore suppose that in this case anything has gone wrong with the soul; it is only something that has gone wrong with the machinery. In old age, when men begin to get more quiet and retired; when it seems as if the soul retreated into the innermost recesses of the body as the tide of life ebbs away from the shores of the senses; when man seems not to be so acute, or so clear in his head, or so vigorous in his thoughts, or so brilliant in his imaginations, what is it that is at fault? Not the soul; it is probably riper and more vigorous than it ever was; but the body tumbling to pieces; rafters are falling here, fragments there, the roof yielding elsewhere; and how can we expect that the inhabitant can enjoy comfort when the house is going to pieces about him? It is thus that we draw the inference that the soul is in the oldest man just as mature, as vigorous, as capable of thought and of great thought, as it is in the youngest. There is a great outcry in the present day against employing men who are old for great and arduous purposes. An old man with a thoroughly vigorous body is more to be trusted a vast deal than a young man or a man of middle age; if he has a weak and worn-out body, that alters the matter altogether. But as long as the physical health is strong, you have a soul in an old man riper, with greater experience, capable of greater things, than the soul of a far younger man or a man of middle age. It is one of the proofs that this world is not our home, that just as the soul has grown readiest for living it leaves it. Can I suppose that this world is our all, our only destiny, when I notice that just after I have acquired so much knowledge, so much experience, so much wisdom, so much thought—that when I have served my apprenticeship to life, and am ready to live—instead of being allowed to live, I must go the way of all the earth, and leave a scene for which I am at length most fit? What does this prove? That this world is but the vestibule of another; that time is the grand porch of eternity; and

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that life here is only a preparation for that glorious life which alone is worthy of the name.

Having seen that the soul may live independent of the body, let me notice what is stated in the next place, that the body is just as immortal, and in its ultimate results as indestructible, as the soul. We see it laid in the grave, folded in the narrow house appointed for all living, till those that loved most the countenance that even under the shadow of death is so dear to them, must bury it in the grave, and hide it out of sight. Yet of that very dust that is laid in that sepulchre it is written—"This mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible incorruption; and those traces of the cold finger of death legible to all that run while they look—this death shall be swallowed up in victory;" and in that very fallen, but then resuscitated shrine I shall not feel only, but sing, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" This leads me to think of that day when the trumpet shall sound, and Christ shall descend; and with him the souls of all that are now with him in glory; and the beautiful thought shall be actual which is so comforting to all, that when we leave this world it is not the last time we shall be in it; we shall return to it again: "Them that sleep in Christ will he bring with him;" and on that very spot in which the soul laid down that dead dust it shall put on that same again; not the clinging garment of decay, but the glorious robe of immortality; and we shall be caught up together with Christ, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord. Hence when the trumpet sounds the dead dust that sleeps beneath the green sod of the country churchyard; the royal dust of all the Pharaohs, entombed in the bosom of the Pyramids themselves; noble clay in marble mausolea and in monuments of bronze; the sailor that sleeps so sweetly in the Euxine, with the sea waves to chime his requiem and the winds to peal his last funeral march; the caravans that have been buried in the sand-drifts of the deserts of Central frica,—shall all rise at that royal sound; and this ortal shall put on immortality, and this corruptible

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incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. These two facts, then, are absolutely certain: the soul's individuality, its distinct existence whilst the body is in the grave; its higher life while it is separated from the body; and secondly, the certainty of the resurrection of the body, of the very body that fell, without its defects, without its decay, without any of the evidences and the traces of sin and sorrow about it.

Having established these two facts, let me notice now, what I think is the main subject of the passage I have selected, that there are in Scripture two distinct resurrections. And that these two resurrections exist will be obvious if I turn your attention to the perfect parallelism between the verse I have read in Revelation xx. and other verses contained in the Gospel. For instance, in verse 4 it is said: "They lived." In 1 Corinthians xv. 22, it is said: "In Christ shall all be made alive." That is literal. In verse 4 it is said: "They reigned with Christ a thousand years." Are we to take that as literal? Hear the whole promise, 2 Timothy ii. 12: "If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Is the suffering literal? Yes. Then the reigning with him must be literal also. Again, it is said in verse 5: "This is the first resurrection." Luke xiv. 14: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just;" that is, the resurrection as distinguished from that of the unjust. In verse 6 it is said: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." In John v. 29, it is said: "They that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life." In verse 6 it is said: "On such the second death hath no power." In Luke xx. 35, it is said: "They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more." Now in every instance I have quoted from the Gospels this not dying any more, this living, this reigning, this recompense at the first resurrection, are all described as strictly literal; and if so they prove that this chapter, instead of being a mere fan-

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ciful parable, is a literal prediction of strict and literal facts.

In 1 Corinthians xv. we read: "Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits;" he rose on a Sunday 1830 years ago; "afterward they that are Christ's at his coming;" mark you, not all, but "they that are Christ's at his coming."

Let us enumerate the difficulties that have been urged by those who do not take the literal view of the passage. It has been said that all this is purely a figurative picture, and that we are not to understand the resurrection of the dead spoken of in this 5th verse as identical with the resurrection of the dead spoken of by Paul, by our blessed Lord, and by all the apostles. They allege that this is the resurrection of the spirit, and the principles, and the faith, and the hopes, of the sainted martyrs; not therefore, as they think, a literal resurrection of the body. If it be so, it is easy to arrive at the conclusion that logically follows, that there is no resurrection at all. And hence one writer in America, distinguished for his genius and even for his piety, Bush, has consistently followed out the conclusion of Brown, Barnes, and others, and declares that there is no such thing as a resurrection of the body at all, but only the safety and happiness of the soul. But if you look into this passage, you will read: "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." Does not that imply that some of the dead lived at the beginning, and that the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished? Well, let us look at the close of the thousand years, at verse 11, where John says: "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in

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it; and death and hell," death and hades, "delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." If the first resurrection that is spoken of in verse 5 is only a figurative and spiritual thing, then the resurrection delineated at the close of the chapter must be a figurative thing also; and the inference is that there is no resurrection at all. But on the other hand, if this second resurrection at the close of the chapter be literal, then the first resurrection must be literal also; for first and second apply to similar things, and are descriptive of similar events, only with numerical distinction or succession. We therefore argue that as it is confessed by all, with one exception, that the resurrection spoken of at the close of the chapter is literal, we must infer that the resurrection spoken of in the 5th verse is literal also: and that there is therefore a first and second literal resurrection of the body. Besides, it seems to me as if the sacred penman had taken pains to teach this, for what does he say? "This is," when he explains what he has been saying, "This is the first resurrection." That is John's way of explaining what he has already said. For instance, when he saw seven candlesticks, he says: "The seven candlesticks are the seven churches;" that is, he tells you what they mean. So after he has given this glowing description of the dawn of the millennial morn, he explains what it is; it is, he says, the first resurrection; the explanation being the literal historical fact; what preceded being something difficult that needs to be explained. But the objection made by Barnes, with apparent force, is drawn from Ezekiel xxxvii. 12, where the following words occur: "Prophesy unto the dry bones, saith the Lord; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." Now, argues Mr. Barnes, who in other respects is a very able commentator, here

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we have the words *grave, burial, resurrection,* used in a sense that everybody will confess to be figurative; it is a description of the Jewish people that Ezekiel here portrays; and unquestionably these words *grave, resurrection, death, burial,* as used by Ezekiel, are not to be taken in their literal, but in their figurative or metaphorical sense. Then argues Mr. Barnes, you must interpret Rev. xx. by Ezekiel xxxvii. Now it would seem to me that the right way is to interpret the Old Testament by the New, not the New Testament by the Old; or the more obscure by the more bright. But the real reply to this objection is a conclusive one. The prophet explains who it is that are dead; he tells you that these bones are the house of Israel; in other words, it is a national death, a national burial; and therefore justly and fairly it indicates a national or figurative resurrection. But in Rev. xx., taking the very principle admitted by Mr. Barnes, the Evangelist says it was a literal death, for they were beheaded with the sword; and as he states it is a literal death, so we must argue, by the very illustration that Mr. Barnes has quoted, that it is a literal resurrection. In other words, we have the key in each instance to the solution of the whole subject. In Ezekiel it is expressly declared to be a national, figurative death; therefore it is a national, figurative resurrection: in the Book of Revelation it is expressly declared to be a literal, actual death; therefore we argue it is a literal, actual resurrection. But it has been objected to this again that here we have an account, not of the bodies of those that were buried, but only of their souls. For instance, the words are: "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded." Well, it has been argued from this that as only souls are spoken of, we must understand it to be purely figurative and spiritual, not material and literal. I may repeat, in the first place, that the soul is repeatedly used in Scripture for the whole man. In Nineveh were so many souls; that means bodies. Again, not one soul should be saved; that means the whole man.

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But I will not assume that here; but what I allege is, that whilst the seer uses the expression "soul," he describes what they are by what they were previous to their resurrection. The evidence that he does so is found in the close of this chapter, where he says, for instance, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God;" but they were living when they stood before God. The Evangelist describes them by what they were before they were risen. So when he describes them that were beheaded he calls them souls, what they were before they were raised, and had experienced the first resurrection; just as in the same manner he calls the dead, small and great, standing before the throne, what they were before they were raised, in order to describe, or rather to identify them with the same persons. And perhaps another reason may be that John uses the phrase *souls* to lead back the reader to the beautiful scene in the 6th chapter, under the fifth seal, where we read that "The souls of them that were slain for the word of God cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." But, in order to show the continuity of the drama, and to be consolation, as it were, to these, here is the fulfilment of the promise made to the souls below the altar; that these very souls that thus cried and were thus replied to rose and reigned with Christ in their risen bodies a thousand years. Besides, the whole language is inapplicable to the soul. How could the soul be buried? how could the soul rise? The just, and fair, and obvious interpretation of the chapter is that it was the dead raised from their graves, the dead in Christ; and constituting the first resurrection. But it has been urged as another difficulty that martyrs only are spoken of. I answer, John's attention was arrested by the foremost of the group, and these chiefly he alludes to. Our blessed Lord

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is not mentioned by John in the midst of them, though it is obvious that he was there; then only the dead are mentioned at the great white throne, but the living were there also. And again, by referring primarily to martyrs he may by another link identify this glorious issue with the promise made to the martyrs under the fifth seal, to which I have already alluded; that white robes were given to them, and they should rest for a little season. If in addition to this we take other passages of Scripture, we shall find the same idea distinctly unfolded throughout the whole New Testament. For instance, in Romans viii. 18, I read as follows: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation," literally, the revelation, "of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Here then is all creation represented as in a state of agony and expectancy till a certain event is consummated. What is that event? The redemption or the resurrection of the bodies of Christians, which is the first resurrection. And then in that magnificent chapter, 1 Corinthians xv., we have the same thought brought out unmistakeably there also. Verse 22, for instance: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end." Now the Greek words there are very remarkable; 'Christ the first fruits; afterward;" επειτα denotes an interval; ειτα, another word, meaning also a longer

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interval, "the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." So in the 52nd verse of the same chapter: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory;" that is the description of risen believers; not of risen unbelievers. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." All this alludes to Christians only; because the risen wicked will not thank Christ for their resurrection; they will not praise him for their victory; they will not say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" When you come to that very remarkable passage in 1 Thess. iv., you find a still further parallel explanation of it: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." When he comes down to this world, he will come again to judge the quick and the dead. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord; that we Christians who are alive when Christ comes, and remain until the very advent of the Lord, shall have no precedence in rising from the grave over them that died hundreds of years before. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." But why caught up in the air? We read in the close of 2 Peter, that when that day comes as a thief in the night, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and

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the works that are therein shall be burned up. Then this process will take place while Christ and his risen saints and his glorified living ones are in the air; and as soon as this earth has undergone its last baptism, and is purified by fire, and made a meet dwelling-place for the resurrection bodies of the saints, this island world of ours, struck off by sin from the great continent of glory, shall be reunited to that continent; no deep sea shall separate them, no terrible gulf shall part them; but they that are there and we that are here shall constitute one bright, and happy, and better country; and Satan will see at the end that instead of having gained one trophy he has been the instrument, not willingly but by coercion, of this earth being made a nobler home than when Adam and Eve were first introduced into it; and man raised to a pitch of glory, happiness, and peace that would never have had an existence if sin had not entered and man had not fallen. I know the difficulty occurs to some, if this earth is to be burned, as Peter distinctly states, how is it possible that any can live while the earth undergoes that dread and terrible baptism? That it is to be so Scripture emphatically asserts. The heavens and the earth are kept stored with fire until that day. Geology here steps in and confirms what Scripture asserts. But it is asked, if this earth is to be destroyed, how can God's people, their bodies being raised before its baptism, live during so fiery an ordeal? The answer is, God saved a remnant at the Deluge, when the Flood overflowed the wide world; God saved a Lot from burning Sodom; God saved the Christians from the wreck of Jerusalem. If God has said it shall be, we know that it must be. But the probable explanation of the difficulty is this: we shall be raised up with the Lord in the air; but is there no intimation in the Thessalonians that we return? I open the 21st chapter of Revelation, which follows the millennium, and we have there the picture of the return: "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem"—that is, the company of God's people—"coming down from God

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out of heaven"—having been caught up with the Lord in the air till this fiery baptism was finished—"coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And so shall they thus be for ever with the Lord."

A passage has been quoted from Daniel xii. 2, which seems at first not to sanction this idea: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." If this be strictly and literally translated, it would imply that the resurrection of all shall take place at once; and that when the whole are raised, some will be for everlasting life, some for everlasting death. But it is remarkable that here again our translation is at fault. A most distinguished critic says: "There is in this passage a distinction between them that awake and them that sleep; and the strict and literal translation is: 'And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; these'"—that is, those who awake—"'to everlasting life; and those'"—that is, the parties that sleep—"'to everlasting death.'" So that the passage, instead of disproving it, would prove it.

Such is the prospect before the saints of God. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in this resurrection." How should we aspire to partake of it! how anxious should we be to be found in Him who is the resurrection and the life! And that resurrection will consist of all the individuality of every Christian that ever fell asleep. Not one flower shall perish; not one sheaf shall be lost; not one shall be wanting at that glorious Easter morn when nature shall put on her Easter robes, and no sin nor trace of sorrow shall be known in it any more. I believe at that day, in all probability not extremely remote, the dust you consigned to the grave, thinking it would be long before you should ever meet it again, shall come forth; and not one fugitive expression on the countenance shall be wanting; not one tone in the well-remembered voice shall be hushed; not one element that enabled you to

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distinguish and to say, "This is my child; that is my wife; this is my husband; that is my son," shall be then and there missing. There will be perfect recognition, perpetual communion: all the excellences of humanity will survive, with none of its defects; more than its pristine glory will be there, with nothing of its subsequent decay; and so shall we be for ever with the Lord.

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LECTURE IX.

SATAN LOOSED FOR A LITTLE.

THERE are difficulties in every great truth. We see through a glass darkly—yet we see. What we are about to read and discuss has long perplexed the prophetic student.

"*And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city; and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*"—REVELATION XX. 7-10.

IT is right that I should show that I am not singular—not at all singular—in my interpretation of this chapter. Learning and piety hold the same views. Upon the great and essential verities of the Gospel I speak with all the dogmatism, if you like, with which it is possible to speak. I have no doubt that Christ is God; or that it is his blood alone that cleanseth from all sin; or that the Spirit of God alone changes the human heart. On these things, therefore, I speak absolutely, as an ambassador from heaven, bringing glad tidings, and laying them at the door of every man's individual heart. But when I try to explain a confessedly difficult theme, I admit at the beginning, and I would repeat it at the close,

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I may be wrong. But it becomes the duty surely of one who has a Bible, and who believes that every word in that Bible is from God, to do his best to cast light upon it. I am persuaded the force and weight of evidence is in favour of the exposition I have given. If you can present an exposition that casts more consistent light upon it, I will accept it; but I must retain my present belief till I have conclusive evidence, such as I have not yet seen, in the opposite direction. One of the ablest Greek scholars of the day is the present Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Alford. He has written a critical Greek Testament; and as he has just published the fourth volume, which treats on the Apocalypse, I felt anxious to ascertain what he says upon that very subject. He states one remarkable fact, that all the writers of the earliest ages of the Christian Church of weight and character hold substantially the same view that I have been endeavouring to elucidate in these lectures. For instance, he says: "Some of the more marked upholders of the view since that great Revolution"—that is, the French Revolution—"have been divided among themselves as to the question, whether the expected second advent of our Lord is to be regarded as preceding or succeeding the thousand years' reign or millennium. The MAJORITY, BOTH IN NUMBER, AND IN LEARNING AND RESEARCH, ADOPT THE PRE-MILLENNIAL ADVENT; following, as it seems to me, the plain and undeniable sense of the sacred text of the book itself." Such is the testimony of one who is at least competent to speak. He says in another part of the same book: "On one point I have ventured to speak strongly, because my conviction on it is strong, founded on the rules of fair and consistent interpretation — I mean, the necessity of accepting literally the first resurrection, and the millennial reign. It seems to me that if in a sentence where two resurrections are spoken of with no mark of distinction between them (it is otherwise in John v. 28, which is commonly alleged for the view I am combating)—in a sentence where, one resurrection having been related, 'the rest of the dead' are afterwards mentioned—we are at

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liberty to understand the former one figuratively and spiritually, and the latter literally and materially, then there is an end of all definite meaning in plain words; and the Apocalypse, or any other book, may mean anything we please. It is a curious fact that those who sustain this, studious as they generally are to uphold the primitive interpretation, are obliged, not only to wrest the plain sense of words, but to desert the unanimous consensus of the primitive Fathers, some of whom lived early enough to have retained apostolic tradition on this point. Not till Chiliastic views had run into unspiritual excesses was this interpretation departed from. It now remains that I say somewhat respecting my own view of the character and arrangement of the prophecy, which may furnish the reader with a general idea of the nature of the interpretation given in the notes. And first for the principles on which that interpretation is based. The book is a revelation given by the Father to Christ, and imparted by him through his angel to St. John, to declare to his servants things which must shortly come to pass; in other words, the future conflicts and triumphs of his church; these being the things which concerned 'his servants.' Of all these, the greatest event is his own coming in glory. In consequence, it is put forward in the introduction of the book with all solemnity, and its certainty sealed by an asseveration from the Almighty and everlasting God. Accordingly, we find every part of the prophecy full of the subject. The Epistles to the Churches continually recur to it; and it forms the solemn conclusion, as it did the opening of the book. But it was not the first time that this great subject had been spoken of in prophecy. The Old Testament prophets had all announced it; and the language of this book is full of the prophetic imagery which we also find in them. The first great key to the understanding of the Apocalypse is the analogy of Old Testament prophecy. The next is our Lord's own prophetic discourse, before insisted on in this reference. He himself had previously delivered a great prophecy, giving in clear outline the main

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points of the history of the church. In this prophecy, the progress of the Gospel, its hindrances and corruptions, the judgments on the unbelieving, the trials of the faithful, the safety of God's elect amidst all, and the final redemption in glory of his faithful people, were all indicated. There, they were enwrapped in language which was in great part primarily applicable to the great typical judgment on the chosen people — the destruction of Jerusalem. When this book was written that event had taken place, completing the first and partial fulfilment of our Lord's predictions. Now, it remained for prophecy to declare to the church God's course of dealing with the nations of the earth, by which the same predictions are to be again fulfilled on a larger scale, and with greater fulness of meaning. It is somewhat astonishing that many of those who recognize to the full the eschatological character of the prophetic discourse of our Lord should have failed to observe in the Apocalypse the very same features of arrangement, and an analogy challenging continual observation." And then he says, in another part: "But here again, according to the practice of which I cannot too often remind the student, a voice from heaven announces the character of the new and final vision which is to follow: Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And now, in the prophetic details of the third of the previous angelic announcements, and of the proclamation of the blessedness of the holy dead, the great events of the time of the end crowd, in their dread majesty, upon us. First, the procession of the glorified Redeemer with the armies of heaven following him, coming forth to tread the winepress of the wrath of Almighty God. Then, the great battle of the Lord against his foes, the beast and the false prophet, leagued with the kings of the earth against him. Then, the binding of the dragon, the old serpent, for a season. Then, the first resurrection, the judgment of the church, the millennial reign; as to which I have again and again raised my earnest protest against evading the plain sense of words, and spiritualizing in the

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midst of plain declarations of fact. That the Lord will come in person to this our earth; that his risen elect will reign here with him and judge; that during that blessed reign the power of evil will be bound, and the glorious prophecies of peace and truth on earth find their accomplishment—this is my firm persuasion, and not mine alone, but that of multitudes of Christ's waiting people, as it was that of his primitive apostolic church, before controversy blinded the eyes of the fathers to the light of prophecy. But the end is not yet" —and this introduces what I am now going to speak on —"one struggle more, and that the last. At the end of the millennial period Satan is unloosed, and the nations of the earth are deceived by him; they come up against and encircle the camp of the saints and the beloved city; and fire comes down out of heaven and consumes them, and the devil who deceived them is cast into the lake of fire. Then is described the general judgment of the dead, the destruction of death and Hades, and the condemnation of all whose names are not found written in the book of life."

I have extracted this because it is the judgment of a learned and candid scholar, who has spent his days and years in elucidating the sacred text; and I must say, his judgment so perfectly coinciding with my own, formed without the knowledge of his book, for the book has only been recently published, is to me additional proof, if additional were wanting, that ignorant men may scoff, and silly sceptics may sneer, but they cannot overturn the truth, or arrest the march of events. As soon may the waves of the sea wash the rocks away as the scoff or the sneer of the thoughtless shake truths based not on the fancies of the ignorant, but on the severest exegesis and the most profound criticism of the best and ablest scholars of this and of earlier ages.

But all heretofore and up to the subject of this lecture has been exceedingly plain, at least, according to my mind. Here, however, I enter on a passage which I confess is beset with difficulties. I do not know well

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how to discuss it, or how and by what means I can cast any new or intenser light upon it; but it would be unfair if after having tasted all the sweets of the previous part, and leaving something of the beauty and grandeur of the close still to enter upon, I should have passed over this very difficult section of a grand theme; namely, the unloosing of Satan, which the Dean of Canterbury believes to be literal; his deceiving the nations, and then his final catastrophe.

These thousand years of beauty and of blessedness are to have a close; a close that in some degree seems undesirable and disastrous; but perhaps it will only be brief, like a summer night in the North of Scotland, where, when the evening twilight comes, and just as its darkest moment arrives, the first rays of the morning twilight begin to cover the mountain tops, and to glorify the length and breadth of the land. So it may be that this night at the close of that millennial day will be very short, and that its last expiring shadow will be lost and glorified in that grand sunburst whose beams shall have no interruption, whose brightness will have no shadow; for he shall reign and shine in noontide splendour for ever and for ever. There is one thought, however, full of practical instruction to us; that is, that Satan is set forth in three different places as indulging in one great wickedness. For instance, in the 3rd verse it is said "that he should deceive the nations no more;" and then it is said that he is to go out, at the end, to deceive the nations once more. I wish Christians were as consistent in their good work as the devil is in his bad one; he goes out at the close of these thousand years, still on the same career and for the same mission, to deceive the nations. This is the characteristic practice of Satan, I believe, at the present hour. If I accept nations in their strict and literal significance, I may ask what explains the chronic fever that pervades all the nations of the earth at this moment, unless it be the power and presence of some giant deception of the kind here spoken of? Look wherever you may you trace his footprints. Turn, for instance, to the Mahometan nation:

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it seems as if Satan, knowing he has but a little time, were rousing into its maddest frenzy the fanaticism of the Moslem; so that the massacre that took place at Jedda, and the massacres that have filled the streets of Damascus with blood, and the atrocities that would take place even in the neighbourhood of Constantinople if they were not under the eyes of the powers that sheltered them once, but probably will not shelter them again; all seem to indicate that Satan, knowing that he has but a little time, is seizing every national element of disturbance, and exasperating it to the very utmost of his power. If I turn to another nation of the earth, without touching anything that goes beyond my province, Russia is seen still thirsting to raise the Cross on the Mosque of St. Sophia, still looking for the beautiful Bosphorus and the shores of the Mediterranean as the limits of her gigantic and powerful empire; and perhaps if she were mistress of Turkey matters could not be worse than they are; for Constantinople and Turkey in Europe, and every land in which the Turco-Moslem is encamped, has become the shame and the scandal of Europe, not to say of the world; and if it were safe for the equilibrium of nations that Russia should have Constantinople (and I believe she is destined in the prophetic record to have it, and will have it, do as nations like), it could not be worse than it is under the reign of "the sick man," whose slippers two imperial candidates are waiting to possess, and whose death will lead to convulsions that, according to the prophetic record, will envenom the troubles of the latter days. If we look across the sea to another part of the Continent of Europe, does it not seem as if Satan were still deceiving Austria, as he deceived her at first to form the wretched Concordat with the Pope, which she has at last been driven to renounce or modify; tempting her to believe that Hungary, a nation of brave, and gallant, and high-spirited men, can be crushed by force, instead of being conciliated by love; a sort of infatuation which must arise from the deception of the Wicked One? If you turn to Spain, there to read the Bible is a civil crime and a religious

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heresy. To tell a man that Christ alone is the way to heaven is followed by imprisonment. In that land the Church of Rome seems to have found a last retreat, and to hold her mediæval revels and to exercise her ultramontane tyranny untouched; there civil liberty is a crime, religious liberty is heresy; and poor prisoners, men upright, just, and good, and loyal, are lingering out their lives in damp, dark dungeons, charged with no crime but this, that they insist upon the right of worshipping their own God in the way that to them seems right. Turn to France, how disturbed is it still! it seems as if Paris were the echoing centre of all Europe. I stated in the course of expositions of the Apocalypse that during the last vial, or rather the sixth vial, and at the beginning of the seventh, three unclean spirits go out like frogs, it is said, to deceive the nations of the earth—the very work in which Satan is here said to be engaged. And it has been argued by students of prophecy, and almost demonstrated by Elliott in his Horæ Apocalypticæ, that as the three frogs were the national arms of France on the standard of Clovis and of Charlemagne, and the original national insignia, the deceptive spirits that are to deceive and convulse the nations of the earth are to go out from Paris. When we look at present complications we cannot help suspecting that deception is going on there, and ambition nursed and fostered in minds to whom it would be much better were it a stranger. If we pass on to Italy, it looks like a gleam of sunshine amidst the black clouds that cover Europe; and yet Italy is surrounded with difficulties. Satan, who envied Paradise its happiness, envies Italy its resurrection, and its progress, and its rising greatness. If one look at Rome, the great centre of Italy, and at the poor unhappy Pope (and really one feels for him personally, for he is a kind, benevolent-hearted old man), we cannot but see how bitterly deceived he is, when instead of rectifying abuses he is fulminating anathemas; when instead of pouring blessings on the land he is issuing curses against those that

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disturb him, and threatening them with all sorts of torments here and hereafter. And if we go across the Atlantic Ocean, what a scene is there at this moment! America, our child—America, sprung from ourselves, the inheritor of much of our freedom, and retaining our literature, our language, our religion, and liberty; what Christian, what Briton, will not grieve that that land, which we looked upon as our sister and ally in days of trouble, should be torn in twain; and hearth should be set up against hearth, and home against home, and state against state; and the whole of that magnificent empire in the agonies and throes of a terrible, if not a destructive revolution! Is it therefore unreasonable, is it unwarrantable, to conclude that Satan is deceiving the nations of the earth, and leading them to that catastrophe to which the prophetic word so constantly points?

If you should ask how he deceives them, it seems to me very plain. He is persuading some that righteousness does not exalt a people; that right is not might; that truth is not the highest policy; and that Christianity impedes, not increases, the prosperity of nations. He deceives them, by creating in the hearts of rulers ambitious desires; by leading them to think that numbers, not moral excellence, is strength; that war is their glory; that the pruning-hook is more beautiful when shaped into the sword, and that the ploughshare is more glorious when it is turned into the spear; and that camps and barracks, the dread necessity of nations, are really their glory, their beauty, and their excellence. Who can look abroad upon all the countries to which I have referred without seeing every king preparing for conflict, every capital turning into a camp, every nation rousing all its energies; as if all saw the wave, the approaching wave of some terrible convulsion; and each felt it his direst and most terrible necessity to make ready for the crisis which he anticipates. Satan seems to be deceiving all the nations. Not only is he deceiving nations, but individuals also. He is teaching on the one hand that the Bible is an obsolete book; that the Divine Persons that are spoken of in it were simple

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myths; that it is a mere congeries of exaggerated notions of the imperfect and ignorant fishermen of Galilee; and that you are not to trust to it as a light to your feet and a lamp to your path, but to what they call the inner light—a light kindled from beneath, till the heart is renewed; and then there is a light revealed from above, but a light that shines in unison with the light of this sacred volume. On the other hand, he is deceiving people to trust in priests, in sacraments, in rites, in ceremonies; and their hearts depart from the living God. But we rejoice in this, that for a thousand years (and these thousand years may not be far distant), he shall be bound; though at the end of the thousand years—why I cannot explain; why it should be I know not; but I take what God says, and accept it as truth, adoring where I cannot understand, trusting what I cannot grasp, believing that to be true which God says, even when I cannot give the explanation why and wherefore;—at the end of the thousand years, we are told, he shall be loosed for a little and go out to deceive the nations of the earth.

The great difficulty that has been felt by thousands is, who are these nations of the earth? I believe when Christ comes this earth shall undergo its baptism of fire, just as once it underwent its baptism by water; I believe that all the dead in Christ shall be raised, and all the living in Christ shall be changed at the beginning of the thousand years. I have stated that all those magnificent predictions in Isaiah will then be actualized; that then the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted above the mountains; that then the desert shall rejoice, that the wilderness and the solitary place shall be made glad; that the lion shall lie down with the lamb; that there shall be no more death, nor tears, nor sickness, nor sorrow, but that all former things shall have passed away; and a happy earth shall be the abode of a happy and a rejoicing people, with Christ personally manifest and revealed in the midst of them. Holding all this, and having as I think proved it, the difficulty occurs, who are these nations found in the four

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—literally in the four—corners of the earth who turn up at the end of the thousand years? Stranger still becomes the question when we notice that their multitude is as the sand of the sea in number. Some excellent Christians, who agree with me in every point I have stated heretofore, differ with me in this; they think that on some outskirts of this world there are to be sinners during the millennial rest; raised socially, physically, morally, by the indirect light of Christianity, but not regenerated and Christian men. I confess I cannot understand this; the difficulty of such a solution seems to me enormous. The explanation, therefore, which I have suggested, and which I candidly admit has not been accepted by many, and has also its difficulties, is this: we find that all the Christian dead are raised at the beginning of the millennium; those that die enemies to the Cross, unregenerate, unbelievers, unsanctified, are raised from their graves at the end of the millennial economy. The first resurrection consists exclusively of believers; the second resurrection, therefore, out of which believers have been gathered, is and must be, for it is so stated, the resurrection of those whose names are not in the Lamb's book of life. And if you notice at the close of this chapter, where it speaks of the great white throne, we are told nothing about the sanctified and holy dead; it tells us: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." And then verse 15: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Thus we have here only the resurrection of those who are enemies to the Gospel. I well know the difficulty will occur to sensitive and benevolent minds—does it not seem hard, if these spirits are lost and ruined, to raise their bodies, to aggravate their sufferings, and add to their sorrow for ever? The answer is, that we believe as men, and we are glorified as men—that is, soul and body.

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We reject the Gospel as men, and we are lost and ruined as men—that is, soul and body. Hence, then, if this last resurrection consist of those who have rejected the glorious Gospel of the Son of God, who have repudiated Christ as the only Saviour, may it not be that those that come from the four corners of the earth are the lost ones raised from the dead at the second resurrection, retaining all their antipathy to truth, all their hatred of the Saviour; who shall, out of sheer desperation and malignant feeling, make this last assault—which is crushed in its birth; for the instant they make the assault fire descends from heaven, and utterly destroys them;—may it not be, that just as the risen saints, risen believers, reign with Christ for a thousand years in joy and felicity, those who make this last assault are the risen unbelieving, who have resisted the truth, and make this final and unsuccessful effort to extinguish it? You say, it is strange that they should do so; and yet it is not strange. The Jews sinned against God amidst the most stupendous miracles; they saw the pillar of fire march them through the nights in the desert; they saw the pillar of cloud shade them from the intense heat in the day; they saw the cloven ocean form a promenade for Israel, and collapse and become a grave for pursuing Pharaoh; they heard the strains of Miriam as she celebrated a grand deliverance; and yet, in spite of miracles, in the midst of miracles and manifestations of the living God, the Jews sinned, apostatized, plunged into idolatry, and denied the God that led them through the desert! So in the case of Satan himself; you might argue, how can Satan at the end of the thousand years attempt to do what he must know must be a failure? The devil knows now that his whole policy must end in a gigantic failure; he knows that success is impossible; but it is just as much his nature to deceive as it is the nature of a bird to sing, or of a happy heart to unload its happiness in song; it is the nature of the fallen archangel to do so. So if we find that God's ancient people—at least called by his name—in the midst of stupendous miracles tempted him, disbelieved

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him, blasphemed him; if we find that Satan, after the experience of six thousand years, persists in his old policy, and wields his old weapons, and tries his old plans, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the risen wicked, retaining all their passions, appetites, desires, hatred, antipathy, malignity, may make this last effort under the inspiration of him who is the murderer, the liar, and the deceiver, from the beginning to the end. This may meet what is otherwise an inexplicable incident in that grand panorama which begins with the thousand years, and continues for ever and ever in blessedness, in beauty, and in joy. All that we can learn, so far as we have been able to cast any light upon it, is that at the end of the thousand years there is an interval of trouble: we, if we be Christ's people, shall not be scathed by it, for we are with him, our Prophet, our Priest, and our King, and no weapon formed against us can prosper; the victory is certain; the Prince of Peace is King of kings and Lord of lords. The awful thought—and it is I must say a most awful one—is that there shall be multitudes of the lost. Yet, if there be multitudes of the lost, it will be nothing in comparison of the vast multitudes of the saved. The vast majority of the human race will be saved; a minority only will be lost. It is an awful thought that a minority should be lost; it is an awful thought that one immortal spirit should perish for ever and for ever. The thought is so dreadful that I do not wonder at men recoiling from it; and if it were not asserted broadly, unmistakeably in the Bible, I would not believe it. But we know too that angels, and Satan their leader, have been suffering in chains, and darkness, and torment ever since they fell; and they will suffer for ever and ever. We sometimes think it must make us unhappy that there should be anywhere near us such awful sufferings. This only is certain, we shall not be unhappy in heaven. At present it ought to make us unhappy that there are several hundred criminals in Newgate, in Millbank Penitentiary, in the prison at Holloway. The palace of the Queen is in the midst of prisons; your

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places of business may be some of them very near Newgate—does it not make you often unhappy that there should be such a state of things within those dark, thick stone walls? Does it not make you unhappy that there are dens, and cribs, and dungeons, poetically called homes, in every neighbourhood where there is squalid misery, and hunger, and wretchedness, and destitution, and want, and where efforts to improve recoil sometimes in leaving them worse? does not that make you unhappy? Does it make the angels that are in heaven unhappy that a large avalanche of their number, a mighty landslip from glory, has plunged into the depths of hell? It is not said it does so. All that we are sure of is, there shall be no tears, nor sorrow, nor grief in glory. What we now lament is that any human being should be the victim of so terrible, so enduring a calamity. But what should that teach us? If it be true, if we cannot resist what is plainly written, the lesson like the duty is abundantly plain. Are you safe? are you Christians? If you are in a ship foundering at sea, you would try to save yourself and every passenger and sailor on board of that ship. If, therefore, you believe that such a catastrophe as that which is here spoken of, and which is called the second death, and into which the devil and his angels, and all that have repudiated Christ, shall be cast for ever—if you believe this fearful but Scripture truth, take care that you are not in that number. And in the second place, let every man try to the utmost of his power, wherever his influence can reach, to be able on the margin of heaven to quote one whom he has been the means of rescuing from darkness and translating into God's marvellous light. If we know the Saviour, what are we doing to make him known? If we have tasted his salvation, what are we doing to spread it among others? Instead of thinking of contingencies which we cannot explain, or trying to sound the depths of an agony which is unfathomable, let us lay aside speculations about a matter painful in one extreme, if glorious in another; and let us bind ourselves to instant duties, using our influence, our wealth, our

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power to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ. Let me ask, what are you doing in the church to which you belong, in the neighbourhood in which you live, to bring souls to Christ? Are you teaching any one child, are you helping any one school? are you doing the utmost that you can to bring out of darkness them that are its victims, and to lessen the number of the lost by multiplying and increasing the numbers of the saved?

I have tried to explain this passage; I admit the difficulties to be great; but perhaps we are not so far distant from these great events; and then what we know not now we are assured we shall know then. And if we belong to Christ's flock, and are among his people, and are trying, as I have told you, to lessen the number of the lost by increasing the aggregate of the saved, ours will be the blessedness of Daniel, who tells us that "they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."

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LECTURE X.

THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.

We now see in the advancing panorama a sublime and solemn spectacle. God help us to read it aright.

"*And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*"—Revelation xx. 11-15.

We have seen that the resurrection consists of two distinct parts: the first, which takes place when Christ comes, is the resurrection of all believers from Adam to the last hour; the second, which is here described, is the resurrection of the rest of the dead, who lived not till the thousand years were finished. Referring to the former, he says: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power." This benediction would imply that on the rest, that do not then rise and reign, the second death will have power. This leads to the inference that the great white throne, Mr. Elliott thinks, may be erected at the commencement of and continue throughout the

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millennial reign, and that judgment may proceed during the period of that reign; and therefore that the day of judgment is not a literal day, but a period or day of a thousand years. Yet he seems to doubt whether this position can be made good, and whether the old interpretation may not after all be the better one; that the great white throne is set up chronologically, just as it is placed in the record, at the close of the millennial epoch; at which he sees the gathering of the dead, small and great. But who are these dead? They are not the dead that are saved; they are not the happy and the holy dead that have part in the first resurrection; they are not those on whom the second death has no power; there is not one word said in this part about any of these appearing at the great white throne. It is true there are the small and great; there is the opening of the books; there is the opening of the book of life; there is the account of those judged according to their works; not condemned by a decree, but treated according to their merits; there are seen death and hell giving up the dead; and then there is the sentence in the 15th verse, as if just the antithesis to what is recorded in the 5th, or first resurrection, on those upon whom the second death hath no power; we read: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." It seems therefore that the rest of the dead (it is a very fearful thought) are those that have rejected the great salvation. I do not dare to number among them all the heathen, of whom I do not assert that all will be lost; I would not number among them all the tribes that never heard the glad sound of the glorious Gospel, or venture uncharitably and unwarrantably to pronounce that these will all be lost. But those that surround this great white throne, whoever they be, or whatever be their number, are not those that are in the first resurrection, nor those on whom the second death has no power; they are found not written in the Lamb's book of life, and are rejected of God for ever. It is a very sad fact that there should be a single human

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being lost for ever. It is a loss that no analysis of ours can express; a loss that no imagination of ours can grasp; a loss, however, that is possible. "A lost soul," says the Rev. Robert Hall, the eminent Baptist minister; "what tears should be wept at such a spectacle! Were the heavens to be covered with crape, and the earth with mourning, or were the whole of nature to become animate and vocal, would it be possible for it to utter a groan too deep or a cry too piercing to express the magnitude of such a catastrophe?" And yet, alas! the catastrophe does occur. The lesson for us is to take care that we be not numbered among those that are in the second resurrection; the lost are suicides; they are not killed, but self-slain; they would not be saved, and therefore they must eat the fruits of what they themselves have sown.

The rest of the dead, then, appear before that judgment-seat, called the great white throne. For Christians, there is no judgment day; the judgment morn is not for the trial of Christians; already they are justified, already they are acquitted. What does the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans say? "There is no condemnation," that is, there is no judgment-seat, there is no trial, "to them that are in Christ Jesus." "He that believeth on the Son of God shall not come into judgment," or into condemnation. This therefore is that very tribunal to which Abraham refers when he says: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" to which the wise man refers when he says: "God shall bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or evil;" it is that very judgment to which Daniel refers when in the 7th chapter of his prophecy he tells us that the thrones were set, "and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened.

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I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." Nothing about acquittal; all about judicial wrath poured upon those who obey not God, neither have believed the Gospel of his Son.

In this vision which swept across the Ægean Sea, and which John from his stand-point on Patmos saw, he beheld first of all "a great white throne;" great, for the greatest and the most awful issues flow from it; great, for a great multitude is there; great, for it is what the prophets call the great day of the Lord; great, for angels, thousands and ten thousands, are present, the witnesses of the scene; and his own people, the bride, the redeemed out of every kindred, and every people, and every tongue, assessors with him on the judgment throne. These are represented as saying: "Just and true are thy ways, O thou King of saints." It is not only a great throne, but a white throne; every deed of darkness is there revealed in its intense splendour; every thought that is evil projects its shadow on it; there is nothing hid in the past that shall not be revealed there. No meanness shall conceal the little; no majesty shall carry beyond its control the great. There shall be neither cowl, nor phylactery, nor robe, nor crown, nor coronet, nor dignity; but naked, responsible, and immortal, they that are there stand before the great white throne.

He speaks next of him that sitteth on it. Who is he? None else than our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ. All Scripture assures us that he is to be the Judge. For instance: "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son." Again: "This Christ is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead." And again: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, he shall sit on the throne of his judgment." We therefore find that he who sits here is the Lord Jesus Christ. What a startling contrast will be presented to them that crucified him! He that was

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despised and rejected of men is here disclosed as the Judge of all the earth. He that was constrained to say, "The foxes of the earth have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," is there the throned Judge of the universe. He for whom the world found a cross and the stranger a grave is now exalted King of kings, the dispenser of irreversible issues, fixing a destiny that shall have no end for ever and for ever. If the Lord Jesus Christ is to be the Judge, I need no other evidence that he is God. I could conceive the absence of God from creation, and delegated power calling worlds into being; but I cannot conceive a delegated being exercising the awful prerogatives that belong to sitting on the judgment throne. If God surely is anywhere, it is on the judgment-seat; and therefore the fact that Jesus is to be the Judge of the living and the dead implies that he is God over all, blessed for ever.

We find next described the effect of his appearance upon that throne: "From whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." What does this mean? The new heaven and the new earth have already superseded the old. It therefore means that all the distinctions, the grandeur, the magnificence of created things shall pale and sink down in the presence of a majesty that covers all and of a glory that puts out all; the glory of him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. We have similar allusions in the Apocalypse. For instance, when th seventh seal was opened, we read that the heavens departed like a scroll; and every mountain and island was moved away; and yet the history of the future that succeeds this shows that it was not a material removal, but an overwhelming and absorbing presence that made all these disappear from man's eyes. We read also under the seventh vial that every island and every mountain fled away as recorded in the 16th chapter; and yet after that we find the earth still in existence. We read in the Psalms, what casts light upon it: "The sea saw it, and fled;" that does not mean that the sea disappeared, but that nature, agitated

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and overpowered, retired and shrunk before the majesty and glory of a present God.

We have thus seen the great throne, the great white throne, and the Son of God, the Saviour, seated on it; we have the effect of his appearance; all nature retreating into shadow before that sunburst that awes earth by its magnificence and overwhelms it by its splendour. We have next the subjects of this judgment. They are, as we have seen, "the rest of the dead;" those that are not "blessed;" those that are not exempt from the second death; those, therefore, that have rejected and despised the Saviour; those, in short, described by Jude when he says: "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints;" now what does he do? Here is the great white throne: "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." In other words, it is the judgment upon the five foolish virgins who, when the Redeemer comes, are shut out—he knows them not; the judgment upon the man who received one talent, and who came to Christ and presented it laid up in a napkin, saying, "I knew that thou wert an hard taskmaster, reaping where thou hast not sown; here is that that is thine own;" he said to him, "Depart; cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." Here, in other words, is the picture of those to whom the Saviour shall say: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in;" "and these shall go away into everlasting punishment," that is, the rest of the dead; "but the righteous," that is, those already invited into his kingdom, "shall go into everlasting life." And therefore we infer, not one Christian is found in the last group surrounding the great white

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throne; not one believer is there placed under judgment. The small and the great, according to the distinctions of this world, are there; the black and the white, the bond and the free, the great and the insignificant, are all there, amidst a light in which the least sin will be seen to project its dark shadow; and amid a silence in which each shall hear the pulse of his own heart, and trembling, and conscience-smitten, and all reminiscences accusing, these shall go away into everlasting punishment. No mundane distinction is then and there of any value; neither learning, nor talent, nor genius, nor power, is of any avail. Pharaoh shall come forth from his pyramidal tomb, and the dead from beneath the greensward in village churchyards shall come forth, and shall stand before that throne; and they shall then feel the truth of what the preacher often taught and the hearer often despised: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

We read as the next act in this great and solemn assize that the books were opened. What are these books? They are part of the imagery that John saw; each image meant to teach a definite and impressive lesson. The first book that will probably be opened will be the book of the history of the church, the world, and mankind. It will be seen on its page, the gleaming page of that marvellous volume, that all the patronage of the world never could sustain what was false; and that all the persecution of heathen emperors and papal inquisitors never could extinguish one precious truth, or arrest by a hairbreadth the march of the kingdom and the Gospel of the Son of God. It will be seen from that book, that marvellous record of human history, that the truths that shot forth from Patmos, or emerged from the Mamertine prison at Rome, or rose upon the smoke of the fires that consumed the martyrs, were power, and might, and progress; and that all that opposed them resisted in vain, or resisted only to their own irreparable ruin. There shall be opened at that great white throne, in the second place, the book of human experience. What will that experience in each individual be? It

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will be this—that wherever I did right I was worth nothing; that wherever I did wrong I was weak as I was worthless. The experience that will be reflected from that shining page, having its counterpart in every individual heart, will be—all beauty fades; all riches take wings and flee away; all that men struggle for, and quarrel about; all that men consume their strength and their energies in seeking to attain, are worthless as the baseless wreck of a vision; and that truth, and righteousness, and love, and peace, and liberality, and virtue, and joy, have been the music that accompanied the march of God's people; and the best and the noblest, as they have proved the most lasting elements in the experience of mankind. One cup of cold water that you gave to a Christian; one mite that you gave to the least of Christ's brethren for his sake, will be a reminiscence at the last day more resplendent than a fixed star; whereas all the wealth, and the honour, and the power and greatness of this present world will be found to have been—what the wise man long ago pronounced them to be—vanity and vexation of spirit. At that day too, and before that great white throne, will be opened the book of human character. This is the true ledger; the just and unadorned biography. There is the chart that points out shoals, and reefs, and quicksands; the log-book that tells you of the distance you have run and the speed with which you have run it; the diary in which nothing is entered that is unreal, but on which, with all the speed of the telegraph, has been struck every hour the deeds, the thoughts, the sympathies, the hopes, the desires of the human heart. The great life journey of the human heart is there: how are you writing it out? If you are not writing on the heart, it is being written on; and what is inscribed upon the heart will at that day and at that hour be reproduced in all its clearness. At that day too will be produced the book of conscience; and the lost at that hour will feel—we did this against the protests of conscience; we refused to do that, notwithstanding the invitations and the urgings of conscience; and they will feel that its

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accusations outnumber by millions its best and its most plausible excuses; and that they will have not one word to say; but like the man who refused the wedding garment, and when the master came in and asked him why he was seated there without what he had only to lay his hand upon as he entered, and put on, he was speechless. What a strange thought! the saved in glory will break forth into waves of song, and thanksgiving, and praise; the lost in misery will be speechless; they will see their doom to be so terribly deserved; and awful as it is, it must be deserved, or God would not inflict it; or rather as they would not be saved, God has left them to eat of the fruit of their own doings; and now they are lost, sunk to misery, just as a stone sinks by the law of gravitation to the earth. It is the nature they have cultivated, it is the course they have deliberately adopted. Oh it is much better, as I have repeatedly urged, if instead of trying to show that the future of the lost is not so black, that its duration is not so long, that after all it is not such a bad place, till it is diluted into a sort of temporary purgatory—instead of all that nonsense, worse than nonsense, for if God's word is to decide the matter it is not true; if we tell you that there is not a human being who hears the Gospel that need be lost; that at this moment heaven with all its magnificence is offered to all without money, without promise, without condition, without pledge; and that it is the very simplicity of this sublime offer that makes numbers stumble at the threshold, and think or feel it is too good, it is too simple to be true. If earnestly, in the depths of your hearts, you have accepted Christ as your Saviour, you are saved. Every one that can say honestly—I am not speaking of any mysterious or transcendental experience; I am speaking of a simple proposition, to be taken in all the simplicity with which I utter it—I have committed myself, with all my sins and my virtues, and my soul and all its destinies this very day to the blood of Christ to be ransomed by it; to the righteousness of Christ to be covered by it; to the care of Christ to be tended by it; if there be any

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truth in the Bible at all, that man is a Christian; and if a Christian, you shall never stand before this great white throne; you shall not come among those who are not written in the Lamb's book of life; you shall never taste the second death. Instead of trying to dilute the misery of the lost, oh try to preach the glory and the riches of Christ! try to preach this—that it is his grief in heaven, it is his rebuke to you, it is the sorrow of his soul, if that sorrow penetrates the inner sanctuary where he is, that he has done so much for you, and that you will not take him at his word; that he has suffered so much for you, and you will not trust him; and that he offers to you all that you need to make you happy here and happy hereafter, and you will not have it. It is only under the splendours of an open heaven, accessible to every human being, that I dare try to portray the shadows of that hell that has no termination. I would not venture even to touch the theme, or to say one word about it, if I felt that on any one who hears the Gospel there was a crushing doom that drives him to the depths of hell in spite of his own will. If I so believed, I should be silent, that I might not augment the misery which I could not avert. But I speak strongly because I am persuaded on the surest foundations that no decree damns any man; that there is no seal of reprobation upon any man's soul; but that we may all be saved if we will, and that not one of us need be lost unless he so elects. The elect are all that will, and the non-elect are all that will not; and you are not incapable of being saved, but you are unwilling; and what men call want of power is simply want of will; and want of will means simply, I will not take God at his word, and I will not believe him, and I will take my own way, and try to brave the issue, let that issue be what it may. The books will be opened; the book of Providence and experience; and lastly, the book of life will be opened, and whosoever is not found written in that book of life is cast into the lake of fire.

It may be asked, where will all these come from? Here is the record of them. The sea, the grave of

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nations, will open its restless waters, and a scene of awful and terrific grandeur will be witnessed there; some of the dead that perished by shipwreck; thousands that perished in naval battles; thousands that have slept with the sea-weeds for their shroud, and the chime of the ocean's waves for their requiem of a thousand years; the roll of that last trump shall penetrate the depths of the desert sea, and every sleeping one there, if a Christian, shall hear at the first resurrection, and come forth to eternal joy; and every sleeping one who is there who is not a Christian shall come forth and be judged according to his works before the great white throne. And not only will the sea give up the dead that are in it, but earth also shall give up the dead that are in it. Wherever man is buried, there will the sound of the resurrection trumpet reach, and he shall come forth, either in the first resurrection to reign with Christ, or he shall come forth in the second to receive retribution for the deeds that have been evil, and which he has done in the body. The sands of the desert shall roll aside, and disclose their dead; the great tombs in the Pyramids shall open their stony lips, and send forth their dead; the mouldering remains of priests and royal ones that you may see in the British Museum, where they are looked at as curiosities, wrapped in royal robes, covered with mysterious hieroglyphics; every atom of that dust shall be quickened, and they too shall come forth, either to be numbered with Christ's people in glory everlasting, or to stand at the great white throne, and be treated according to their deeds. Hell also, we are told, gives up the dead that are in it. Hell is not here the word for the place of torment; it is in the original *Hades;* the place of souls now disembodied. Your near ones and your dear ones that have fallen asleep in Christ are divided; their bodies slumber in the silent grave, their souls are in *Hades;* that is, they are not in the place of the lost, they are not in the final place of felicity and blessedness, which is yet a future on earth; but they are in a state of joy and felicity up to the measure of their capacity. The present

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heaven, or condition, or place of disembodied souls is not a locality, but a geographical expression; it has often impressed itself upon me, and I am persuaded it is true, that the souls of those that have preceded us to heaven are in another spiritual condition, not in a distant star or a far-off orb in the universe; and that in all probability we are surrounded by troops of glorious spirits, who have finished the fight, who have entered into joy; who look upon us with intense sympathy and interest, and watch for the issues of that conflict on which one of two eternities depends—the great white throne, or the first resurrection of all that believe. Those souls that are now separate from the body shall all come forth; those bodies that are in the sea shall all emerge; those that are in graves, and mausolea, and tombs, shall come forth; and whosoever shall not be found written in the book of life, not being found there by reason of the character he bears, is cast into the lake of fire. What is the meaning of that expression we know not; all that we know is, that from the first verse of the Gospel to the last verse of the Apocalypse there is a bright destiny and a heavy doom, a heaven and a hell, a place for all that receive Christ, and consent to be saved by him, and a place for all that reject and despise, and denounce him, and will not submit to be saved—these are facts which Scripture repeatedly asserts, and it is no use for us to attempt to doubt or to deny them.

What do we learn from all this? First, that the only thing that survives the grave, whether it be among the saved or the lost, is character. "He that is just, let him be just still," that is the saved; "he that is unjust, let him be unjust still." We must lay down at the grave's mouth all the adventitious distinctions of life. All mundane inequalities must lie levelled in the grave. We must appear either in the first resurrection or at the great white throne without pomp, or riches, or power, or influence, with nothing but immortality, responsibility, and character surviving. Secondly, if this be fact, what a momentous thought, that character is

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generated here which determines our lot for ever! You are now laying on immortal and indelible colours. There is not a child that walks through the streets that is not catching influences that will be reproduced at the last day. It is one of the gravest reasons why we should take an interest in the instruction, education, and improvement of the young, that left to themselves the impressions which they catch are downward and destructive; but brought under the influence of a Christian school, and the lessons of the Word of God, and the example of a kind, and a pious, and a Christian teacher, they receive impressions that will outlive the last fire, and shine with the brightness of the stars and of the firmament for ever and ever. I am perfectly persuaded of this, that whatever be our hopes about the old—if our impressions upon the old are superficial, and our efforts to recover them so often unsuccessful—this does not apply to the young.

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LECTURE XI.

THE GLORIOUS COMPANY.

WE get here a glimpse of the inner glory. We catch a few rays of its blessedness and fulness.

"*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,*" *&c.*—REVELATION vii. 9–17.

ONE seems to tarnish this exquisite picture by trying to expound it. The poet Burns, great for his exquisite thoughts, if pitiable for his sins and sorrows, said he never could read this passage without the tears trickling down his cheeks. There is music in the words the most rich, suggesting feelings the most touching; and enough in the photograph itself, taken by the sunbeams of the Sun of Righteousness from an original actually present, to move, fascinate, and charm. It is after the sealing of those who did not unite with the dominant apostacy that the seer in Patmos, that is, John, says: "I beheld, and lo," what he scarcely expected to see in heaven, "a great multitude that no man could number." What a happy thought that heaven will not be a coterie! nor will it be a few; but a multitude so great that human arithmetic will fail to count and to number it; many in that multitude we did not expect, in our uncharitableness; and some wanting that in our misapprehension we made sure of finding there. But whether we discover these mistakes or not, it will be a vast multitude. We know some of the elements, the reasonable and scriptural elements, of that multitude.

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I have already said all children dying in infancy are saved. They may be the children of Hindoos, of Mahometans, of Pagans; the children of Baptists, of anti-pedo Baptists or pedo Baptists; without exception they are saved. I can prove it I think from Scripture, and it is therefore not mere fancy. If that be true, and half the human race die before they reach ten or eleven years of age, one can see here one great component element of that vast multitude that no man can number. But we see in every age an increasing number of them that fear God. It is quite true there is a great multitude that make no profession; apparently the narrow path is trod by few; but there may be flowers in the desert that we do not see; there may be sunshine beyond the mists of our horizon that we cannot detect; there may be precious stones where we discover only the dust, the unclean dust, of this present world. I should be sorry to think what Scripture does not warrant, that all the heathen will be lost; I dare not infer from the Bible that the vast multitudes of Hindoos and Mahometans will be lost for ever. If saved, it must be by the name of Christ; but God may have secret modes of applying the efficacy of that name to the souls of them that never heard it; and that we may meet in the realms of glory multitudes who never heard of the name by the efficacy of which they are saved. I do not say that this in the least degree interferes with or ought to dilute our duty, which is to go and preach the Gospel to every creature; but certainly we are not warranted by that commission in forming the awful and sorrowful inference that all who have never heard the Gospel are necessarily lost. I believe also that there are Christians even in the Church of Rome, notwithstanding that dreadful and overshadowing apostacy. There is many a true Christian in it in spite of it, not of it. Who has not read of the excellent and devoted Pascal? who can doubt the piety of Fénelon? who can deny the piety of Quesnel? who can doubt the true conversion of Martin Boos, the priest who lived and died in the Church of Rome, protesting against it, and

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yet afraid to abjure it? Take all these elements into your calculation, and you will see nothing very extravagant in the grand words of the seer on the isle of the Ægean Sea: "I beheld a great multitude which no man could number." That multitude was composed of all nations. Our nation occupies the highest place amid the nations of the earth; but it has not a monopoly of Christians. There are Christians in France, Christians in Germany; Christians who worship in modes that we may not like, and who are defaced by errors from which we have happily, thanks be to God! been made free. "And kindreds, and people, and tongues." I do not believe there will be only one language in heaven. Originally there was only one language; and if one wanted to have a proof of the unity of descent of the human family, one might find it by the study of languages. Dr. Wiseman, a very able scholar, though a very mistaken professor of Christianity, states in his able and learned work called "The Connection of Science with Revealed Religion," that it is the unanimous conclusion of scholars on the continent of Europe that all the languages of the earth give abundant evidence of a common origin, while all retain the irrefragable proofs of some great rupture in their history: that great rupture took place, of course, at the division of tongues in Babel. But to show that we need not expect there will be one tongue in heaven only, we have to recollect what grace does. It does not simply annihilate the effects of the fall, it overrules them, and turns them to higher ends. The original condition of mankind was one tongue; sin introduced a fracture into that tongue, and split it into many dialects. Grace will not reduce all into one tongue again, but it will consecrate many tongues, laden with the name and vocal with the praises of Him who is all and in all. Therefore many tongues. "And they stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes," the explanation of which we shall see by-and-by, "and palms," the symbols of victory, "in their hands."

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Now one of the elders, it is said, asked him, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes?" Suppose an elder, or an ancient, which is the meaning of the word, standing on the suburbs of the celestial city; and seeing ascending, winding like a serpent of infinite, or rather incalculable length, a white-robed procession that seems to climb the starry steeps of glory; and never having seen such a procession before, and knowing nothing of its component elements, he asks the question, Who are these? What are they? We have no such people here; all are angels that never fell. Whence then came these, and what are they? It implies they were not natives, they were immigrants, they were colonists coming home; and therefore having never seen them, and not being able to explain the strange and startling phenomenon, he asks the question, Who can they be? Tell me their marvellous story. They present an aspect so different from anything that we have here that I should like to hear the story of their march, the antecedents of their history, and what they are, and how they came to be clothed with these white robes. Then the answer is given: "And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." First of all, then, we learn that the inhabitants of the New Jerusalem were born in a fallen world; they came out of great tribulation. Where only is tribulation? Only where sin is: it is the offspring of sin. And therefore those who enter were born in a fallen world, children of wrath, just as we are. That is the first feature. And the second feature is that they were sinners. How else could they require to wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb, if they were not? And one sinner admitted there is as remarkable as ten millions of sinners admitted there. If God can admit one sinner into the better country, he can also admit millions on millions of sinners; and if you can show me one instance of a sinner saved, you show me a precedent for the salvation of many sinners. They were also sufferers; it is

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said they came out of great tribulation. That man who has most of the sunshine, and least of the shadow of this world's troubles, has the faintest signature that he is a son of God and an heir with Christ Jesus. I do not know a more constant mark of those that are the heirs of glory than this, that they have passed through much tribulation. There is a needs be, or it would not be so. "Our light affliction," says the apostle, "is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed; and our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." I do not say we are to court affliction; that is a very different thing; but if we are God's children, rest assured we shall meet with it somewhere. It may be the sting in the heart that no hand can reach and pluck out. It may be the shadow on the mind which no sunshine of this world can scatter. It may be pinching poverty; it may be losses and bereavements; it may be crosses that the world cannot see, and griefs that the world cannot know, or reproaches the world delights to fling; but in some shape, by some way, of some duration, you will be the children of suffering if you be the children of God. "If needs be, ye are in trouble through manifold temptations; and if ye be without chastisement, then are ye not sons." But these troubles, whatever they be, will not be so heavy, so numerous, so long continued as the devil would make them; and they will not be so light, so few, so short, as our own poor flesh and blood would like them; but they will just be what God sees to be most expedient for us. But mark another feature in this group; for I only touch upon each point as I pass along: they came out of the great tribulation; they were all in it, but not one was overwhelmed by it; they were plunged into that sea, but not one sunk in it. It is the mark of a Christian, therefore, that his troubles only lift him nearer to God, and that his most poignant griefs bring him to Him who is able to sweeten, to mitigate, and sanctify the sorrow, and make it a baptism of refreshment, not the means and

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the element of his destruction and his ruin. They came out of great tribulation.

Then mark what their condition is now: "They came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they before the throne of God." How did they attain this happy condition, this glorious character? First, most of them were martyrs; but they attained to heaven and happiness not by their own blood; it is not said they washed their robes and made them white in their own blood; if it had been so, then human suffering had been the way to heavenly glory. And in the next place, it is not said that the tribulation out of which they came was the baptism that made them meet for heaven. They came out of great tribulation; but it is not added that that tribulation was a claim to glory. No tears from the eye of the penitent can wash away the very least transgression; no baptism, even of fire, can purify the heart and sanctify the nature. A martyr's blood has no efficacy nor virtue in it; a penitent's tears have no expiatory excellence in them. The martyr's blood cannot be the expiation of his own sin; the penitent's tears cannot wash away the least transgression of the shortest life. Nor is it said they reached this happy state by their own doings. These robes they wore, so far from being purified and brightened by themselves, needed to be washed. The robe they wore is used as the symbol of the character in which they were presented. Now these robes were not woven by themselves, nor purchased by themselves, nor washed in their tears, nor made white in their own blood; but it is said they were washed in the blood of the Lamb. And I need not add that their right to heaven could not be in any sense their baptism. Some people in the present day fancy that baptism has an expiatory or regenerative vitality or virtue. But strange to say, if it be so, there is not the least allusion to it. There is no regenerative efficacy in blood, in tears, in baptism, or in any institution that man can appoint or that the church possesses. Then what was it that purified their robes?

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The answer is: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Now why should that blood purify? Because it has a virtue that no martyr's blood ever possessed—it is expiatory. The only expiatory element in the universe is the blood of Christ. Your death may be a death of intense agony; it may be a sacrifice paid to a noble and a sublime cause; but in no man's death and in no man's suffering is there the least element that can be pronounced expiatory or atoning in the sight of God; it is not possible. Then why should Christ's blood be so? Because he was God in our nature; satisfying as God, suffering as man, presenting an atonement so complete that it needs no addition, and it can bear none. An angel's tears or a martyr's blood would only pollute those glorious robes. Nothing can make them clean but one grand element; and that man who looks for heaven, and for a right, and franchise, and title to heaven only through the blood of Christ, never, never will be disappointed. "They washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." How truly does this justify the language of the prophet: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool!" Now here is the right to it, the blood of Christ alone: "They washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Mark well the illative that follows; it is immediately added: "Therefore, or on account of this, are they before the throne." Why are they before the throne? Because they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The whole ground of their acceptance is the atoning and the meritorious efficacy of the blood of Christ. But, some one says, how can that blood touch us? Do you mean to say that literally we must be sprinkled with it? That would be absurd. The Roman soldier that pierced Christ's heart with a spear was probably sprinkled with that blood, but he died a criminal still; and the Jews that shouted, "Not this man, but

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Barabbas!" probably were sprinkled with his blood, but they died criminals still. And if it were true that what they show in one of the churches in Belgium were the very blood of Christ, if I were to touch it it would have no efficacy; if it were sprinkled upon you it would not be of the least value. Then you say, why employ this language? I answer, the blood is the life; the shedding of that blood was the death; and when I speak of washing our robes in the blood of the Lamb I use a scriptural metaphor, simply denoting that with my whole heart's trust I look for heaven and everlasting joy only, exclusively, on this ground, that He who knew no sin was made sin for me who had done nothing but sin, that I should be made the righteousness of God by him, who had done all righteousness for me. And hence those phrases constantly employed in Scripture, such as—we are justified by Christ's righteousness; we are saved through Christ's blood; we have redemption by his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, are all sacrificial language used to impress more vividly a great moral truth, namely, that Christ suffered in my stead, clothed with my sins, and was smitten, that I, represented by him, clothed in his righteousness, might be acquitted, absolved, and justified by him. My sins on him were his death, and his righteousness on me is my life. My sins on him, not in him, brought him to a cross; his righteousness on me, not in me, will lift me to a crown of glory. When Christ cried upon the cross, "It is finished!" there was nothing in him worthy of that death; when I shall be admitted into glory everlasting there will be nothing in me worthy of that glory. My sins *on* him, not *in* him, brought him to the grave; his righteousness *on* me, not *in* me, will lift me to glory. If you can feel that truth; if it ceases to be a dogma outside, and can be cherished, and held fast, and grasped, and lived on, and fed on by you in your inmost hearts—the beautiful language of the Church of England

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Collect, read, learnt, marked, inwardly digested—that to you will be the washing of the robes and the making them white in the blood of the Lamb.

It is said "they stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb." Here we sit at his feet learning the lessons that he teaches; there we stand before him: here humble, lowly, on the earth; there raised to the dignity of sons, heirs, sitting with the Lamb upon his throne, as he has sat down with the Father upon his throne. Mark, in the next place, the dignity of their position—they *stand* before the throne; not before a cross, but before the throne. The idea is introduction into the royal presence of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. Then it is said, in the next place, "they shall hunger no more;" that is to say, if there be the sensation of physical hunger it will be no sooner felt than it will be satisfied. But if it allude to spiritual hunger, they shall no more hunger for living bread; the living bread that cometh down from heaven will be their nutriment for ever and ever. And then how magnificent is that picture: "He that sitteth upon the throne shall dwell among them!" The Hebrew word *shechinah*, the *shechinah*, or the bright glory that dwelt between the cherubim on the mercy seat in the ancient temple, is derived from the Hebrew verb shakan, which means "to dwell among us;" and these words translated literally from the Hebrew, as they are not, but from the Greek, would be, "And he that sitteth upon the throne shall be the *shechinah*, the visible glory in the midst of them." "And the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne," it is said, "shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." But it is very noticeable here that they serve God: "they are before the throne of God, and serve him." There is no indolence there, they serve—active religion. Perhaps now the redeemed souls that are in heaven at this moment serve him. We know that angels are constantly ministering to him; they are ministering spirits to them that are the heirs of salvation. And I have not the least doubt that your brothers and your sisters, and your fathers and

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your mothers, and your husbands and your wives, and your children, that are now in heaven, are engaged in sublime and ceaseless service, carrying out the grand behests of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords. And it may be, I do not assert it, because Scripture is silent here —it may be that the thought suggested to your mind, that turning of your feet that altered the whole current of your life, may have been a ministry from some angel or one of those glorified ones sent to minister to them that are the heirs of salvation. "They serve him day and night, without ceasing." And then it is said: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne." What a thought! heaven will never be without the shadow of Calvary. It is very striking that throughout the whole Apocalypse, which is a picture of the future state, we read constantly of the reminiscences of a cross. "I saw a Lamb just as if he had been slain;" and again: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne." There is a most remarkable contrast running through the whole Apocalypse between two churches, and between two great and living ones. The one church is called the ἡ πορνη, the woman seated on seven hills; and the other is the spouse, the bride, ἡ νυμφη, the bride of the Lamb. Then there are two glorious living ones; the Lamb— and it is remarkable that the Greek word translated "Lamb" is not the masculine, which occurs in John's Gospel, but the neuter, αρνιον, "the Lamb;" and then the correlative of that is θηριον, the wild beast on the seven hills, drunk with the blood of the saints. And if you will only read the Apocalypse carefully, carrying with you these two contrasts, the false church and the true church—the wild beast drunk with the blood of the saints, and the Lamb—you will have the grand outline by which you may estimate and measure the length and breadth of that magnificent vision. This Lamb that bears the reminiscence of a cross; this Lamb who points back to Calvary by his appearance; this Lamb who has all the traces of his agony and bloody sweat, is in the midst of the throne, a throned Lamb, a King and a Priest, a Sacrifice and a Saviour.

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"And he shall feed them" with living bread, "and shall lead them unto living fountains." In this world we have cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water, but there we find living fountains. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The Hebrew word for a fountain is the same Hebrew word which means also the eye, and the word is suggestive; he shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from those fountains that overflow oftener than we wish by eyes accustomed to weep. And this peculiarity of the Hebrew explains that beautiful passage in Jeremiah, where he says: "Oh that mine eyes were tears, and my head were a fountain of water." Oh that my fountains, that is the eyes, really wept, and that my head were one whole eye, that it might weep day and night for the sins of my people.

We shall see him one day no more through a glass darkly, but face to face; and the splendour and the riches of that high festival will make us marvel that we were so pleased and satisfied with this world's poor fare. Let me ask, have you washed your robes in that precious blood? Have you cast your sins upon the Lamb that taketh them away? Do you belong to the bride, that church that is making herself ready, on which the baptism of the Spirit, both here and elsewhere, seems to be descending? Are you in that happy number? do you belong to that bright and blessed company? Then happy are ye; rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

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LECTURE XII.

THE HAPPY DEAD.

EVEN now those we call dead are happy. As the day approaches their resurrection comes nearer, and the epochal hour of their perfect joy begins to sound.

"*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.*"—REVELATION xiv. 13.

IT would be a poor religion that would carry its consolations to the fireside, but arrest them at the grave's mouth. It would not be equal to all the necessities of our condition, if it did not shed its calm of peace, its splendour of hope, where the near and the dear repose beneath the shadow of the cypress, as well as scatter its bright and happy lights under Christmas roof-trees and by Christmas firesides. It is a religion for the breaking heart as well as for the bounding heart; for life's sorrows as well as for life's joys; and one does not know whether it ministers most of sweetness to our joys or of consolation in our sorrows; it equally meets the necessities of both—it is a religion in which to live and to die, and to hope, as we lie down under the shadow of death, that we shall rise again. The language of the seer is the language of joy. Unhappily we have not yet grown accustomed to look at death, as we should, in the light of Christianity, of the Cross, of Gethsemane, Mount Zion, and the resurrection morn. We associate with death all that is gloomy, and dark, and sepulchral. Hence, the monuments you find in cemeteries are often Egyptian sarcophagi, broken columns,

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images of weepers like Rachel that will not be comforted, inverted torches. What are all these? Heathen symbols, the symbols of despair, the monuments that atheism might erect, but that Christianity must spurn and deplore. Everything associated with the sleeping-place of the sainted dead should be bright, and joyous, and happy. If one could take away from Père la Chaise its frivolity, one would like to retain its brightness. At all events, when we look upon the dead that die in the Lord we can say, not, How wretched, how sad, how miserable! but, Happy are the dead. Now no religion can teach you and me to say so except that which had its birth on a Christmas-day 1862 years ago. No religion can enable us to pronounce "Blessed are the dead" but the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. Happy even is the prince that leaves a magnificent ancestral palace; for if numbered with God's saints in glory everlasting, the transference from earth's brightest scene to heaven's dimmest spot is a transference so glorious that the redeemed that are there must often marvel at the weepers they witness upon earth. If they could speak out from their silence and transmit their voices across the chasm that separates them from us, they would ask, Have you forgotten the words that are taught you in the Apocalypse: "Blessed," not miserable, "are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them?"

We have first of all described here those who are called "the dead." It is, and I admit it so far, a sorrowful reflection that the dead beneath England's soil outnumber the living that are on it. In fact, we walk upon the dust and over the tombs of the dead. Buried generations are beneath every footprint as we traverse the streets of the great city of this great empire. If these dead were unenlightened, or if these dead were all in suffering, it would be a sad thought; but there is here a benediction pronounced upon the sleeping dead that consecrates the ashes of those that are gone, and converts the very chamber of weeping into an

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ante-room, a court, a mansion of our Father which is in heaven. The dead are everywhere. Death was not meant to be; it is an interpolation; it was not in ancient Paradise that was, and it will not be in Paradise that is to come. Christianity does not now extinguish the fact of dying, but it transfigures, transforms, and glorifies it in a Christian. The peculiarity of the Gospel is that it does not put an end to sickness, it does not avert old age, or annihilate death in this dispensation; but it gives those compensatory forces, it imparts those hopes, it strikes in the heart those springs and wells of life that inspire us to say as the apostle said of his bitterest experience: "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed; and though no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, yet afterward it worketh out the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." But we think of the dead as merely the dust that sleeps in the caves of the ocean, or under the green sod or monument, or in the silent cemetery; whereas the dead, in the noblest, the truest, and deepest sense of the word, are those that truly live. The fact is, we are here prisoners in a prison, patients in an hospital, exiles in the land of banishment; the dead that are blessed have gone home, and live as sons in the sunshine of their Father's house, servants who serve him day and night without fatigue and without ceasing. They live; we exist. "Blessed are the dead," then, "that die in the Lord."

But there is here a remarkable distinction, a distinction that involves all. All the dead, it seems, are not blessed. If we could we would have it that they should all be happy. But we are here not to deal with the exclusiveness implied in the text, but with its inclusiveness. Those that we know are now happy, those that we know now live, life in its intensest degree, are they that die in the Lord. Where else they die is of no consequence whatever. It is just as near to heaven from the deep coal-mine in which the miners perished as it is from the Royal Palace of Windsor in which a

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prince fell asleep, trusting in what he repeated, "Rock of Ages cleft for me;" as near to heaven from the wayside, the field, the hut, the hovel, as from noble hall or from sanctuary or cathedral; for the simple reason that the way to heaven is not by a palace nor by a church, but by that living Way which covers all space, and does not cease in its upward stretch until it touches the very throne of God himself. It is they that die in the Lord that are happy, wherever they die.

But what is meant by the expression, "die in the Lord?" "There is no condemnation to them that are *in* Christ." Then, says the apostle—"That I may be found *in* Christ;" and he says in another passage, "I knew a man in Christ." The idea to be conveyed is just this:—as the fugitive found shelter that was legal in the city of refuge, and out of which he could not be dragged; as Noah found safety in the ark, and there was no safety in the largest ship, or on the highest mountain, or in the strongest tower besides; as the guests found acceptance in the wedding garment; so the believer is safe, sheltered, and clothed, and immortal in the happiness he has and in the happiness he hopes for in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Perfect," says Ezekiel, "through the comeliness that I have put upon you." "As by one man's disobedience the many," the mass, were made sinners, "so by one man's obedience shall the mass, the many, be made righteous;" "He that knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Just as our iniquities laid on Christ were never his, so his righteousness laid on us will never be ours. He was infinitely innocent when he sank beneath the load of our transgressions into the grave; we shall be miserable sinners when we cross the margin of heaven, and by his righteousness are admitted into everlasting joy. The safety of the sinner is in Christ; and the refuge is so large, and all so welcome, that if you are not now among the living in Christ, and if you shall not be found then among the dead in Christ, it will not

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be God's blame, it will not be deficiency in the atonement, it will not be exclusiveness in the Gospel; it is because you say what one said of old: My own dress is good enough, and I do not mean to have the wedding garment; my own virtues are abundant enough, and I do not wish to be indebted to any one else; my own condition is all that I want, and I do not want any one to become my sponsor or to take my responsibility upon him. Salvation is consenting to be saved; damnation is refusing to let God keep you out of hell and take you to heaven. I say, condemnation is refusing to let God save you in God's own way, and the man that so persists must be a fool, a madman, and if neither, he is a suicide, he destroys himself, he is destroyed by none. Here then is the great central truth of Christianity, that we live in Christ, that we be found in Christ, that we die in Christ, that we may be through eternity with Christ. It matters little in what rank you are when you die if you die in Christ; it matters nothing to what church or chapel you belong if you are found in Christ; it matters little where you live, in what country, or on what level, or in what circumstances, if you are found in Christ. Each of these things has a value, but I am speaking of the great central and essential element, that settles in the sight of God what we are upon earth, and that determines beyond the grave what we shall be for ever. Are we then among the living in Christ? is our trust there? If we must say, our trust wavers, and our love grows cold, and our memory becomes oblivious, and our feelings become blunted, and the world gains much upon us, more than we could wish, yet can we say, There is a spark of love lingering in my heart lighted from the altars of heaven, which I would not have quenched or exchanged even for earth's best and brightest things? Can you say, If I do not trust as I should, nor love as I ought, nor serve as becomes me, it is my sorrow and my regret that it is not so; and it is my desire and my heart's prayer to God that I may know him more, that I may serve him better, and it is my hope that having lived in Christ I may die

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in Christ; and then, disentangled and emancipated from all the restraints, and the contagion, and the infection of evil in this world, I shall see thee as thou art, and I shall serve thee as I ought, and that for ever?

What a blessed thought, that the way to heaven is so plain and so simple, and that we can think of those that have left us as only to be envied, while they look down upon us and pity us! I know it is very difficult to convince the dying that it is so, because we all have that lingering, instinctive horror of death which we imbibed under the shadow of the departing glory and setting splendour of Paradise, and which never becomes extinguished altogether even in the hearts of the best. But we know the force of thought; we know that thought can master feeling as far as it is in the body; that feeling in the heart can overcome present griefs and sorrows, and through grace make one more than conqueror. And if we take these great truths and lay them to our hearts and dwell upon them, life will have a little of heaven's sunshine to light up its darkness, and we shall be happy living in Christ, and we shall go down into the valley of the shadow of death happy in dying in Christ, assured that absent from the body we are instantly present with him.

I have spoken entirely in this matter of the soul; but I need not say that it is no less true of the body; that the eye of the Resurrection and the Life rests upon every atom of the sleeping body of the humblest believer. On the grave sits literally the angel of the resurrection, waiting to hear the command from the sky, Let the trumpet sound and the dead arise. The cold clay laid in the narrow house appointed for all living is not lost nor cast away, it is not to be consumed in the last fire; but to be quickened, to be reconsecrated, to be rebuilt into a house, a shrine, a body that will have no defect, no decay, no mortality, and that will know no death for ever and ever.

There is an expression in this passage which is well worth noticing, and which is often omitted when one attempts to explain it, namely: "From henceforth;

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Yea, saith the Spirit." We usually read it: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; they rest from their labours;" but it is here: "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth*." What is meant by this phrase? If you read the chapter as a whole you will find that this text is an announcement from heaven toward the close of the present Christian economy. Immediately after this you read: "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." Then take in connection with this what our Saviour says in the Gospel: "The harvest is the end of the world, the angels," he says, are "the reapers;" the wheat is to be gathered into everlasting garners, the tares to be burned up with unquenchable fire. It is at the close of this economy, whenever it may be, and on the eve of the great judgment, and the reaping of the harvest of the earth, that a voice comes down: "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth." It is a special and distinctive blessedness arising from this, that in the case of all that die at the close or approaching the close of this present Christian dispensation, their bodies will not have to rest long in the grave till they are raised. For instance, the silent dust of Adam and Eve has been slumbering in some far distant grave for 6000 years. Again, the bodies of Abraham and Sarah, reduced to insensible dust, lie beneath the oaks of Mamre, where they were buried. The bodies of Paul and Peter, the faithful and the eloquent apostles, rest in their unknown graves, and have been there for upwards of 1800 years. But those that die now are 1800 years nearer the resurrection; those that die on the eve of that great harvest of the earth will only have to sleep a little while; they will be the Lazaruses of the earth: the brother of Martha and her sister Mary was only

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a few days in the sepulchre, and then he rose and came forth. So some will die whose bodies will only be a few days in the grave; and others will never die, because they that are alive at that day will not die, but will be changed, transformed, and glorified whilst they live. Such is the explanation of the remarkable expression: "From henceforth;" that is, from the point of time indicated in this chapter, which is a short time before the harvest of the earth and the resurrection of the dead.

Then the beautiful benediction opens up into such words as these: "Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." The word "Write" looks as if there was a response here to the ancient patriarch's prayer. It is a most interesting thing to go over the New Testament, and notice how often the wants that were expressed in the Old Testament are filled up by special intimations in the New; how often the yearnings of the human heart in an imperfect economy are met and overflowed by the fulness of the more perfect dispensation. Job said in his distress: "Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book; that they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!" Now what words? Here they are: "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Job's prayer is: Oh that this were written! oh that it were engraven in the rock, that the eyes of all mankind might read it and be electrified with the hope! The voice comes from heaven, Gratify the sleeping patriarch on his eastern plains; write it in a book, print it in a book, engrave it imperishable upon the paper of that book: "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them."

Notice in the next place who says it: "Yea, saith the Spirit." That is very beautiful; the Holy Ghost

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is the Comforter of his people, and it is the Holy Spirit that takes these words, and repeats them, and applies them to the human heart. "Yea, saith the Spirit." The Saviour says: "He shall take of the things of mine and shew them unto you." Now one of the things of Christ is, "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "I will give you rest." "Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours;" that is to say, the rest that Christ invited you to is that rest that I now teach you and that I now preach to you; and that rest is enjoyed by all believers who have fallen asleep in the Lord Jesus Christ. In this world we have labour, not rest; but there it is said they rest from their labours. And yet that rest from their labours is not indolence or quiescence, for we are told in another passage in the Apocalypse, in the 7th chapter, that they rest not, but that "they serve him day and night in his temple." Then what is the explanation of it? They will have all the refreshment of labour without its fatigue, all the excitement of action without its exhaustion; ceaseless service, but they will never be weary.

It is lastly added, "And their works do follow them." What a beautiful thought! In other words, the Christians that die in Christ are not without marks that they belong to Christ. What is the mark of a branch of a good vine? That it blossoms and ripens into grapes. What is the mark of a branch of a good apple-tree? That it is bowed nearest to the earth like humility, because laden with most fruit. What is the mark of living in Christ and dying in Christ? That we have done something, or dared something, or tried to do something to make some heavy heart light, some sad one joyful, some desert place to blossom, and that we have not been in the world either blots or blanks, but in our sphere and according to our means, limited as each necessarily is in this respect, we have done something to light some one to heaven; or if we have not done that, to lighten the load and the pressure of tribulation here below, and to give as much of a

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foretaste of heaven upon earth as it is possible for us in our imperfection to communicate.

It is said, "Their works do follow them." If it had been said, their works *precede* them, that would have been merit; but it is here said, "Their works do *follow* them." The believer is accepted not because of his works, but in spite of his sins; the Christian is admitted into heaven not because of the works he has done, but in spite of the sins he has done. But then the works follow after to attest and to proclaim as they follow, We are accepted because he that did these works was accepted, and lived and died in Christ; and we come up now to record this in the registers of heaven and before the great white throne as witnesses, bearing our attestations to the fruitfulness of that character, to the services of that servant: "I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me;" and your works are accepted not as merits, but as the shining footprints on your path through the world—the credentials of a character that was the creation of grace—the irresistible exponents of a piety that never could be monastic or ascetic, that loved to pour itself forth in whatsoever things were pure, and just, and lovely, and honest, and beneficent, and of good report.

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LECTURE XIII.

THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH.

Of whom does the prophet here speak? Of himself or some other? He asks:

"*Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save,*" &c.—Isaiah lxiii. 1-4.

In all probability the conclusion of a Latin Father, Jerome, who lived in the fourth century, is the right one; he says: "Many of us refer this passage to the consummation or the end of the world; we think this to be accomplished at the second advent, in which his voice is heard as judging, slaying his own enemies, and all the enemies of his people." That the words refer to the Messiah seems beyond dispute. It is impossible, as Barnes inclines to believe, to refer them to Judas Maccabæus. Who but the Prince of Life can say: "I that speak in righteousness?" But when we come to look at it in the light of parallel Scriptural passages, we shall see that it can refer to none else but the Messiah; it is the prophetic portrait, as Jerome has expressed it, of that tremendous scene which will issue in destruction to all that refuse to kiss the Son and to embrace his Gospel, but in the everlasting salvation of all that believe at that day. That this passage cannot refer to the atonement made eighteen hundred years ago is abundantly obvious. Christians do quote the words, treading the wine-press alone, as applicable to the sacrifice made on Calvary. But the figurative significance of the wine-press is always judgment, never mercy.

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The harvest of the earth, or the gathering of the wheat, is in loving-kindness; but the treading of the wine-press, the vintage of the earth, is the Scripture phrase for judgment. His garments on this occasion are not sprinkled with his own blood, as would have been the case if the words had referred to the atonement, but with the blood of his enemies; and the language used implies it is the day of vengeance that is come. Calvary was not the scene of vengeance; nor was the epoch of it the hour of retribution; and therefore it cannot apply to it. It has been suggested by others that it may refer to the destruction of Jerusalem seventy years after the birth of Christ, but this is not probable; for in the first place, there is no historic allusion here to the future destruction of Jerusalem. When he came to destroy Jerusalem, if he can be said to have come to do so, he did not come from Edom, nor did he come from Bozrah. Besides, this prophecy indicates that great good is to result to Israel; whereas the destruction of Jerusalem was a great calamity to the whole nation of the Jews. Then to what event or scene does it refer? If we turn to the parallel passages of which I have already spoken, we shall find the true solution. In Revelation xiv. 15, are these words: "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God." This is an event described, I admit, in highly-figurative language; but where there are figures

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there must be facts underlying them. A figure is not an empty conceit; it is a fact, or a truth, or a doctrine clothed in material drapery and made intelligible to us, either by the splendour or the familiarity of the allusions in which it is clad. We have the very same thought in Revelation xix. 11, where we read: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;" and so on to the end of that chapter. Both these describe in most graphic terms the scene that will take place at the close of this present economy; it is indeed very awful, unspeakably tragic; but one ought not to blame the preacher because he speaks forth these things, if he speak honestly, and faithfully, and fully what God has written. Every picture of the Saviour's return to our world—and everybody believes he will come again who even believes the Apostles' Creed—is a bright light set in the bosom of the blackest and the darkest shadow. He comes to tread the wine-press; he comes to the nations to a great slaughter; he comes to a fearful sacrifice in Bozrah, and he comes also, we rejoice to know, and to believe, and to hope, with salvation to all them that believe in his name. The two features that accompany

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his advent, namely, judgment and mercy, are represented by the apostle when he says: "To you who are troubled rest with us;" "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." When shall that rest be? "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels;" doing what? First of all, "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;" that is the one feature. Then the other is: "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day." Here then we have the two accompaniments of the Saviour's return to our world; one vengeance, or translated into softer, but equally just language, retribution upon all that have rejected the Gospel; and the other glorification, honour, majesty, and dignity, bestowed upon all them that believe. In other words, there is the twofold aspect: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom; depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The next question we require to answer is, what and where is this Edom, this Bozrah? There is no place of any importance corresponding to Idumea, or to Edom, and Bozrah now. We know the sites of these places; but their existence is airy as a myth at the present day. Evidently, like Tarshish, which is used to represent a modern Gentile power; like Babylon, used in the Apocalypse to denote the apostacy; this Edom and Bozrah are prophetic names for the enemies of God and of his Christ. That these names, or rather those whom these names represent, belong to an era long subsequent to the day in which Isaiah wrote, namely, to an era still future to us, however far or near that futurity may be, is plain from the 34th of Isaiah, where you will find a picture of this same judgment, in the 4th verse: "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and

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as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams; for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea." The prediction in the 4th verse that the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens rolled together like a scroll, is the picture of what will transpire when Christ returns; and therefore as Idumea and Bozrah are spoken of as existing at that era, these two names must be the representative symbols of a people at that time future. And that this Idumea and Bozrah in the 34th of Isaiah, on whom judgments fall, were a yet future people, is plain from Isaiah xxxv., the picture of what immediately follows; for it says there: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." In other words, the 34th of Isaiah is a picture of the retribution, or of the Saviour when his garments are stained with blood, when he treads the wine-press; and the 35th chapter is a picture of the future, or millennial rest, or eternal sunrise; in the light and splendour of which all the redeemed of the Lord shall be glorified. Edom, and Idumea, therefore, and Babylon, I look upon as names representative of the apostate churches specially in Christendom, and of all who are baptized with their baptism or adherents of their system. I might refer you to Zephaniah i. 7; to Malachi iv. 5; and to Joel iii. 9, where you will find the same picture repeated: in fact, this picture is so often reproduced that it seems to be the design of God deeply to impress it upon the readers of the Bible. Take as one of these the words Joel iii. 9: "Proclaim ye this among the

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Gentiles: Prepare war; wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up; beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning-hooks into spears; let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about; thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get you down; for the press is full; the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel." This is substantially the same picture. I might quote other passages which more or less refer to it; all indicating that this slaughter of Edom, this destruction of Bozrah, accompanied with such fearful evidences of wrath, will take place at the close of this present economy. That this Edom and Bozrah specially represent the apostate and corrupt church of Rome I have scarcely a doubt, from the parallelism of Revelation xix. The last half of that chapter is the picture of this judgment, in language heart-rending and awful: "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged her which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." The whole of the 18th chapter of the Book of Revelation is a vivid and graphic account of the fearful calamities that shall overtake Babylon: we read, for instance: "All nations have drunk of the wine of the

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wrath of her fornication. . . . Babylon the great is fallen. . . . . Her plagues shall come in one day. . . . The voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee. . . . And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Such is the picture of the destruction of Edom, or Bozrah, or Babylon; for all are symbols of the same thing. The 19th chapter is the shout that rings from heaven to earth, and returns from earth to heaven in multiplied reverberations, because this great and wicked apostacy is at length overthrown. "The four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia." Then a voice, a solitary voice comes forth from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great." And then the magnificent peal occurs: "And I heard," in response to this invitation, "as it were the voice of a great multitude." The tramp of horses rushing to battle; the noise of artillery in action, are not comparable to the gigantic shout of a people emancipated from slavery, and rejoicing in the freedom with which they have been made free. "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters." What a grand picture is that! I have often seen the waves of the sea when stricken by the great hurricane roll in, awakening the most magnificent bass it is possible to conceive, and then breaking into spray in the shrillest soprano; and the two sounds mingle together, and form a harmony the only just expression of which is "the voice of many waters." "And as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Here then is the picture of this corrupt church judged, and here are the feelings of God's people in heaven on the occasion.

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I have heard the question asked, How can any possibly hear of these things and rejoice? We grieve that any should be the victims of so awful a superstition; we grieve that any should live rejecting that blessed Gospel; but whatever our feelings may be, we must appeal to the record of God for the emotions that become the occasion; and when that great Babylon shall sink like a millstone into the ocean, and when the smoke of her fire shall rise for ever and ever, he does not say that there is one weeping voice heard, or one regretful feeling experienced among the saved. The sacred seer, who pictures what God inspires, distinctly tells us that all heaven and earth will join together in one jubilant shout, "Alleluia;" because this fearfully vile and corrupt system is gone, in which is the blood of saints and of prophets, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.

When that scene shall take place, certain things will occur that we surely may rejoice in. When this judgment shall fall upon Edom and upon Bozrah, when this vine shall be reaped and this wine-press shall be trodden, we may rejoice that superstition in all its shades shall be dissipated; that dark pall that has hung between a bright sky and a darkened and benighted earth, intercepting from millions the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, shall be dissolved in the splendour of the Sun of Righteousness; and between your heart and that Sun risen in the sky never more to set, there shall be no obstructing or intercepting element at all; we shall see him as he is, no more through a glass darkly, but face to face. There is another fact that will occur then, over which we may rejoice, namely, all persecution shall cease. What is the history of the Roman Catholic Church? Persecution of the people of God. I wish her apologists would only read her history, not written by Protestants, but as I have read it, written by her own selected and most competent divines. Nobody ignorant of the facts of the case would believe that in the name of the merciful Jesus so much blood has been shed; that in the name of our holy and blessed

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religion such tragedies have been enacted. But if God were to bid the earth speak and utter its voice, every one of the Cottian Alps would find a tongue; the dungeons of Naples, the catacombs of Rome, Smithfield in the centre of our own city, the glens and the grey moors of Scotland, each would find a tongue; and when they should hear that that great persecutor of the earth is fallen, they too would shout, "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Let us be glad that the day comes when all persecution shall cease. Truth relies on its intrinsic temper for its lasting and its certain triumphs; it spurns a carnal weapon. Wherever we see carnal weapons employed for religion, all is wrong. They may be the sword, or the rack, or the dungeon; they may be nicknames, or satire, or abuse; wherever these are called into play we may be sure there is a latent consciousness that truth is not upon the side of them that use them. But wherever truth is spoken in its simplicity, no carnal weapon will be needed; it leans upon itself and upon him who is its author for its strength, and encouragement, and support. Persecution is not only an iniquity, it is a huge inexpediency. It is not only a most wicked thing to punish a man's body in order to root out convictions from his mind; but it is a most inexpedient thing, for the reason that it never succeeds. Persecution never rooted out a truth, nor did it ever built up permanently a lie. It has often made the attempt to do both, but in every instance it has failed; and by a strange law, they that use the sword shall fall by the sword. You can never do injury to another, without feeling that injury rebound and strike yourself. Wind a chain round the wrist of the blackest negro in America, and you will find the other end gradually tightening round your own. You are fated ever more to drink the bitterness of the cup you have mingled for a brother. Never do an unjust thing to promote justice; or speak an untruthful thing to promote truth; or use a carnal weapon in any sense to accomplish what you believe to be God's will. Rest assured there is a

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radiance, and a majesty, and a power, about naked truth, that are its most resplendent forces, and the prophecies of its spread and its universal triumph. At that day, when Edom, and Bozrah, and Babylon shall all fall, tradition shall then cease to be the rule of faith in any sense or in any degree. One of the worst things upon earth is what Rome thinks one of the best—tradition. It is the manufactory out of which endless evils and lies have been spun; it is the anvil on which fatal errors have been beaten out into shape; it is the mint from which a false currency comes. It is always so available. When a man wants to establish what is not true, and when he cannot get a text from the Bible, he has only to apply to some old monk, who heard a former monk tell the story, who heard another monk before him tell it; and thus tracing it back by imaginary links to the apostles, he finds tradition a most admirable champion for defending every novelty which man's imagination can introduce. At that day, too, a false priesthood will be utterly swept away. And it is the most fearful corruption of the truth, and one of the worst brands upon the brow of modern Edom, that the minister of Christ is not represented as an ambassador proclaiming good news, but as a priest to make an atonement for the people's sins. The distinction is vital. Grant that the minister of the Gospel is a sacrificing priest, and all the superstructure of Romanism logically follows. The hinge of the vast difference between Protestant truth and Romish error is that one doctrine. In the Protestant Church ministers are pastors, to feed the flock; ambassadors, to bring good tidings to the people; teachers, to instruct them; evangelists, to declare good news; but we deny that the Archbishop of Canterbury is a priest in any other sense than that in which the poorest Christian widow is. We are all in one sense priests unto God, offering spiritual sacrifices; but no minister is a sacrificing priest. We do not require any man to make an atonement for the sins of the people. In the Lord's Supper many people have the idea that it is the minister there

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who gives the sacrament. That is a questionable notion. The minister there presides officially for the sake of order and according to the institution of God, as the first believer; he is the presiding Christian, that is all. It is a festival for a flock, not a sacrifice offered up to make atonement for the sins of a people. These rags of Idumea—these, the errors, the superstition, the idol-worship of Edom and Bozrah, shall be swept away like the mists of morning before the everlasting sunrise. And surely the judgment that clears the sky of such clouds, that eliminates from the earth such corruptions, however severe, must awaken a hallelujah, as it does in the Apocalypse, in the hearts of all them that hear that she who so long corrupted the nations, on whose garments is the blood of saints—Babylon, the mystery of iniquity, has fallen never more to rise. When one at this moment looks to the continent of Europe, grieved at the tragic scenes that are being enacted, and gazing with dismay at yet more awful scenes that loom into view; yet one can see mercy mingling with judgment; for amid the utter desolation of Rome we read of the Gospel preached in its cathedrals; Italian Bibles coming in at one gate, and the Pope making ready to escape by the opposite; his Cardinals in dismay; the priests revolting; and the sagacious and powerful Emperor of the French proposing to dispense with the Pope altogether, and to take matters into his own management. He cannot manage matters worse, he may make them better. The repudiation of the Pope by France, should it take place, would prove like the repudiation of the Pope in England. Henry the Eighth wanted simply to get rid of the Pope; he did not want to get rid of Popery, but he was resolved to be his own Pope; but his violence ended in a glorious reformation. The powerful ruler of France may seek to be his own Pope; but if he succeed, it will end in making that people what they might be—the finest race in Europe: a people with the Bible in their churches, and faithful ministers preaching to them the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When Edom and Bozrah shall thus disappear amid

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these judgments, we must not at the same time overlook the fact that the visible church also is judged. In those expressive parables which the Saviour sets before us in Matthew xiii., we read at the 37th verse: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Here you have the judgment beginning at the house of God, and passing forth like a devouring flame to Bozrah, to Idumea, to Babylon, to the Mahometan nations, and to the Pagan tribes in the utmost parts of the earth. The visible church is not composed of believers only; all the baptized are not regenerated; all that appear at a communion-table will not sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of our Father. And therefore when he comes with his fan in his hand, he will winnow the chaff from the wheat, he will gather the tares and cast them into the furnace, and the wheat he will store up in everlasting garners. Here therefore is judgment not merely upon that great apostacy that has corrupted the earth, but also on the whole visible church. Who dare say that all professors are Christians? Who would venture to affirm that there is any such thing upon earth as a perfect church, or a perfect communion, or even a perfect believer? The great question for us to ask ourselves is, are we tares, or are we wheat? are we believers, or are we mere formalists? We have the same pictures sketched no less vividly in Matthew xxv., in a passage specially worthy of attention: "Then shall the

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kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept," the wise as well as the foolish. "And at midnight there was a cry made"—this is the picture of the second advent—"Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose;" that is, the five wise and the five foolish alike having slept, then awoke; "and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." Here is set forth the very essence of Popery. The five foolish virgins had lamps just as bright and as beautiful as the lamps carried by the five wise virgins, but they omitted what was worth ten thousand lamps of gold—the oil of grace. What is the use of a splendid church with no Gospel? What is the use of an apostolical succession that has no apostolic doctrine? What is the value of a magnificent lamp if it cannot help a man to read even the alphabet? These five foolish virgins had splendid lamps, but no oil. The priestly or Popish thought lay deep in the core of their very nature; for they turned round to the others and said, Give us of your oil, for we have none in our lamps; thus applying to the church for grace, instead of applying to the Lord of the church, who alone can give grace and glory. But these five wise ones, like thorough Protestants, answered, "Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you"—every Christian has grace only sufficient for himself—we have not an atom to spare; but we will do all we can, namely, invite you to apply to the great Master and get oil for yourselves. They were sensible enough to take the advice; they tried the church, and the church had none to give them; they then determined to go to the Master; but while they went—and

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here was their awful state—the door was shut, the harvest was past, the summer ended, and they were not saved. "While they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready," the five wise, "went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Such is the graphic picture of the visible church. I would not dare to say that half the visible church is unconverted, and that half is converted; that is neither the end nor the spirit of the parable; but it is certainly evident that the Lord comes, and in some silent midnight the cry will be heard echoed from mouth to mouth, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." We know not when; for we can neither specify the hour nor fix the time, because the elements of calculation are so difficult and indefinite, but we know it is near. Most reflecting Christians believe that we are approaching what I have called the Saturday evening of the world's long and weary week, that things are rapidly accumulating to a crisis. Nobody can look abroad upon the earth and not see the portentous peculiarity, the startling solemnity and intensity of the age in which we live. But what is to be our inference? "Lift up your heads," believers, "for your redemption draweth nigh." Do I address one who has no oil in his lamp?—do not apply to the priest, nor to the sacrament, nor to the church; none of these have any to spare; but before the Bridegroom comes, and before the doors are shut, apply to the Lord of oil—to use a Scripture phrase—apply to the anointed Priest, Prophet, and King, and he will give you the oil of grace and of glory also: "that unction from the Holy One which teacheth all things."

Blessed thought, however, in the midst of those scenes the people of God are safe! When you look upon the events of the earth, and begin to feel dismayed, turn to the 8th chapter of the Epistle to the

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Romans, and read it, beginning with "no condemnation," and ending with "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Beautifully has the apostle condensed all into one text: "The grace of God"—that is the oil that we need—"the grace of God teacheth us," first, "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts;" and secondly, "to live soberly, righteously, godly in this present world;" and lastly, "to look for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our great God and Saviour."

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LECTURE XIV.

THE NEW HEAVEN, AND NEW EARTH.

WHAT a glorious prospect comes within the horizon of our view!—all Satan and sin introduced fleeing as mists before the eternal sunshine, and all that Christ has purchased and prepared set before us and advancing into possession.

"*And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea.*"—REVELATION xxi. 1.

WE have seen the severe but short storm which burst upon a peaceful earth at the close of the thousand years. We have seen the triumphant safety of the people of God by his grace and strength, notwithstanding the fury of those that assailed them; we have seen the devil that deceived them cast into the lake of fire. We saw for a moment, as the seer saw it on the Ægean Sea, the revelation of the great white throne, reflecting from its surface of awful purity the least shadow of sin; and One seated on that throne from whose face the heavens and the earth with all their glory sunk into insignificance and paleness; we saw the books were opened containing the mysterious records of generations that have passed away; the unwritten records that are stored in human hearts, and the written acts that are visible to human eyes; we have seen the issues of the judgment according to the books; and we have witnessed the sea, in language unspeakably sublime, giving up from its bosom the dead that were in it; death and hell, or death and the unseen world, or soul and body, cast away by that awful sentence—too awful to be spoken had not God, the God of love, written it—"Whosoever was not found in the book of life was cast into the lake

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of fire;" that is, whosoever did not believe, whosoever preferred to be saved in his own way rather than God's way, whosoever would not submit to let God save him, was cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death. From the midst of these scenes of fearful grandeur we see emerging, at the very commencement of the millennial day—for I believe that the 21st and 22nd chapters of this book are the photographic portraits of what is inaugurated at the commencement of the millennial epoch, and not of a totally different economy—a new heaven and a new earth (for the whole Apocalypse, which means "an unveiling," is the seer beholding a panorama from heaven sweep past him on earth, and as one part passes away, another part comes up, beginning at Patmos, and terminating at Paradise returned): "I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." Does this mean that all our existing economy, material and mundane, is swept out, and that another and totally fresh material economy supersedes it? No, certainly not. There is reason to believe from other passages of Scripture that no such extinction of the old and creation of the new will occur. Science itself proves there is no such thing as annihilation. I do not believe that an immortal soul can or will ever be annihilated. I do not believe that a stone, a tree, a human body, or any God-created thing can be annihilated. Change of form, but not extinction of being, is the law everything material is liable to. If it said, "I saw *another* heaven and *another* earth," then I could understand that the present earth and its surrounding mundane economy had all been summarily removed from our present sphere or orbit. But he says: "I saw *a new* heaven and *a new* earth." It is perfectly parallel with a passage which is familiar to us all: "If any man be in Christ, he is"—what? "a new creature;" but when a man is born again and made a Christian, he does not lose his personal identity; he does not cease to be that bundle of memories, and thoughts, and fears, and hopes that he was before. The old nature purified,

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not another nature created, makes the new man. So the old earth and the old heaven purified, not destroyed—disinfected of sin, not disorganized—fulfils and makes actual the splendid vision of the seer in the Apocalypse. Why should this earth be destroyed? I think it would be a compliment paid, or rather a concession made, to Satan infinitely greater than he has earned. At the issue of the winding up of all things, Satan will get nothing but what he can fairly claim as his own. Whatever Satan has introduced on earth will be given him and go with him to the lake of fire; but whatever God has made will be snatched from his tyranny, re-stamped with the signature of redeeming love, and shine forth more glorious and beautiful than it was before. There is nothing in this material earth, originally belonging to it, that is intrinsically wrong. Take sin out of it; lay the fever that racks it perpetually; extirpate evil at its core; let the consecrating hand of the Great High Priest wave over it; and more than its lost glory will return—it will shine the loveliest star in the firmament, the most beautiful orb in the sisterhood of worlds, infinitely the most interesting; for what planet or orb in the universe has an atmosphere that the Son of God breathed; fountains of which the Son of God drank; a river in which the Son of God was baptized? What orb has a Gethsemane, a Calvary, a Tabor, a Mount Zion, a Mount of Olives, touched, and consecrated because touched, by sacred feet? Oh, it would be a terrible calamity were such Peniels, the scenes of such grand traditions, the memorials of such historic incidents, the footprints of so splendid a presence, to be for ever annihilated! it would be a gap in creation, it would be a loss to the universe. But so great a catastrophe is impossible; it cannot be, and God has not said it will be. What then is meant by this new heaven and new earth? It is just the fulfilment of the prophecy in the 65th chapter of Isaiah: "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." It is the realization of Peter's expectation: "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth,

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wherein dwelleth righteousness." It is the restoration and the regeneration of the earth; what is called in the Gospel its παλιγγενεσια. It is a result essential as a complement and a companion of the doctrine of the resurrection. If we are to have material bodies (and if we have not, we shall not rise as men; for the definition of a man is soul and body), if we are to live in a material organization there must be a material world. Dr. Chalmers writes a whole sermon to prove this, that the future will be a Paradise of sense, but not—in his own peculiar style—a Paradise of sensuality; and with conclusive argument he combats the vulgar notion that matter is essentially polluted, and that whatever we can touch, and see, and handle, and hear, is all irreparably bad, and ought to be annihilated. Such extinction is altogether unwarranted; it is a notion alien to the spirit and words of the Bible. The scriptural, or biblical view is the redemption of the soul, the redemption of the body, and the redemption of nature. Hence this orb, when it takes its place amid the family or sisterhood from which it has been long exiled and alienated, and is replaced in harmony with them, will bear not the signature of creative power, which it once bare, but the more august signature of redeeming love, which no other has beside; and in proportion as redemption excels creation, this earth will excel all others, for they have had no fall, they have had no redemption; they have no Paradise lost, and they will not know the sweetness and beauty of a Paradise regained.

In handling these words, and in trying to throw some light upon them, let us inquire, first, what is implied by the new heaven; secondly, by the new earth; and thirdly, the no more sea.

What is meant by the new heaven? Heaven, in its scriptural use, is simply that which wraps our world, and immediately relates to the mundane economy to which we belong; while heaven is used in one sense as the immediate chancel of the universe, where Christ is. Kurtz, a German divine, accepts the discovery made by Maedler, a German astronomer, that Alcyone,

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one of the Pleiades, is the central sun around which our sun, with all the planets, and thousands of other suns with their planets are ceaselessly revolving, and so may be the metropolis of creation. Our sun, and moon, and planets, are a group, not only moving relatively to each other, but all of them moving as a cluster round a great central sun; and it may be the palace of the Great King—so that while present spiritually wherever "two or three are gathered together in his name," personally and bodily, with the marks of the nails on his hands, he may be in some far-off central orb, sending forth his will and inspiration over the length and breadth of the boundless and the unsounded universe. But whether this be so or not, the heavens according to the usage of Scripture, apart altogether from the immediate dwelling-place of God, means the whole surrounding mundane economy under which and before which we now play a part; it embraces all external to the earth that sin has infected. The heavens would not be made new if they were not infected; but where Christ dwells there is no material imperfection or moral infection. Heaven denotes the atmosphere—all that is around our earth and related to it. Some think that sin has smitten orbs beyond the confines of our earth; and it is a very curious fact that as far as we can see into the moon—and we can see any object 100 feet high—we gather that it is a world wrecked, convulsed, and torn; as if sin in its rebound from earth had smitten its patient and beautiful satellite, and shattered it into pieces also. But whatever or wherever may be the limits of the extent of the sin that has infected our world, the heavens so far as they are affected by it will be made new. The sunshine shall no more be darkened by a dense intercepting cloud; it shall no more scorch the earth with tropical fervour, nor will its absence freeze and chill the earth with polar cold. The sea will no more be rent by tempests and hurricanes, and the air will no more be shattered by the lightning, and reverberate the thunder that follows at the lightning's heels. The sirocco will no longer scorch the garden into a

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desert, and the euroclydon, that wrecked the ship of Paul in the Mediterranean, will no more beat; the forest will no more be stripped of its foliage, nor the rose of its petals. Frosts will not nip the young and beautiful buds of spring, or blight the hopes and the prospects of summer and autumn. Sun, and moon, and stars, will no longer remain far off and impenetrable mysteries; and the comet, that people used to think shook pestilence and plague from its wings, will be found, what I have no doubt it is, one of God's beneficent messengers, conveying the expressions of his sympathy and support to the orbs of the sky; and the whole heaven will lap and fold this recovered earth in its warm bosom, and all things will be restored and made new.

But we are told there shall not only be a new heaven, but a new earth; that is, as I have already explained, not another earth, just as a new creature is not another creature. Our earth, when thus made new, will be no more the place of graves. How sad when one walks into the country, or enters abbey, church, or cathedral, to see how death has ploughed up every green sod; how the death damps lie upon flag-stone, tessellated pavement, and encaustic tile; how every village, and city, and cemetery records the deep and indelible fact that death has been here; how earth groans, in the language of Paul, and yearns to be delivered from the pain of receiving her dead children day by day into her bosom! The young, the beautiful, the good, the brave, death strikes with impartial stroke, and the grave, unsatisfied, receives all. Surely this is not meant to be perpetual—surely it is an abnormal, and unnatural, and monstrous condition of things; and therefore if God's word be true, when the last enemy shall be destroyed, every footprint of sin, and sorrow, and death, left upon the sands of time will be effaced and destroyed also. Earth will no longer when made new be an arena on which exasperated nations fight, and kill, and strike down each other. From the days of Cain to the days of the Kaiser and the Czar the earth has been the arena of ceaseless battles. The sword has certainly not yet

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been turned into the pruning-hook, nor the spear into the ploughshare. From Marathon and Thermopylæ to Waterloo; and from Waterloo to Inkermann, Balaklava, Magenta, and Solferino, the earth has been ploughed by the wheels of artillery, torn up by shot and shell, and broken by the enginery of war. There is not a green field in Europe that is not a soldier's sepulchre; there is not a spot that takes a place in the roll of nations of the earth that has not been the scene of slaughter and of bloodshed. This was never meant to be; and hence the prediction is, when earth shall be made new the nations shall learn war no more. It is not the soldier that is the cause of war; it is the sin that is in your heart and mine. It is not gunpowder that does the mischief; it is the wickedness that lurks in the human heart. The cure for war is not the disbanding of the army and the burning of the navy; but the regeneration of wicked human hearts; and whenever that regeneration is achieved and the earth is made new, then the nations shall learn war no more.

When the earth is made new, it shall no more be the place of what is perhaps a melancholy, and what in another point of view is a beneficent sight—of hospitals, infirmaries, and asylums. When one enters an hospital, and visits bed after bed of the sick and the suffering, will anybody tell me that God made that? and when one visits, as I have once, and would not again unless absolute duty compelled me, a lunatic asylum, how awful the spectacle that it presents! for terrible as must be a battle-field on the morrow of the fight, yet ten times more awful is the wreck of broken and shattered minds. These institutions then, created by beneficence it is perfectly true, but beneficence drawn out by the calamity which their roofs shelter, will all be swept away; not because man is less beneficent or God less merciful, but because the inhabitant shall no more say, "I am sick;" and in the beautiful words which are contained in this very chapter, words it is said which the poet could never read without weeping: "God shall wipe away all tears from

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their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are all passed away."

When this new earth shall appear, there will be no more—what is a great blot and stain upon it—gaols, and prisons, and Bridewells. We see at this moment, as schools, day schools and ragged schools advance, that prisons become less necessary. But at that day, when there shall be no ragged boys on the golden streets; when there shall be none who are uneducated, untaught, and unsanctified, there will be no punitive administration there; there will be no gaol, nor prison, nor blot, nor stain, that indicates the very fearful fact that sometimes man becomes so bad that his sin breaks out with intolerable violence, and we are obliged to shut up the leper in a dungeon, or a gaol, or a prison, or a Bridewell, lest society should be broken to pieces by his misconduct. There will be no prison nor gaol.

When the earth is made new, there will be no deserts. It is a strange fact, and one of the proofs that the earth cannot now be as God made it, that upwards of two-thirds of it are covered with deserts, and wildernesses, and marshes, and water. There will be no deserts then, when the earth shall be made new. The instant man sinned (and geology does not disprove it), the rose faded on its stalk, the garden became a desert; and with the sweat of his brow, and the tears of his weeping eyes, and the labour of his hands, he went forth to reclaim from earth's reluctant bosom a handful of stunted fruits to be his food till he should return to the earth from which he was taken, and the soul should rise to God who made it. But under the warmth of that blessed sunshine that shall one day fall upon this earth, literally I believe the desert shall rejoice, and literally the wilderness shall blossom as the rose. Evil shall not gain the day; the devil—a usurper, an intruder, an invader—shall not have the victory; all that he wronged shall be righted, and all he has destroyed shall be restored; and

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the world will close with a Paradise vastly more beautiful than that with which it began.

When this earth shall be made new, and all things in it, those deserts that sometimes exist in human hearts will cease. There is a wilderness often within as well as a wilderness without. Hearts that now break shall then bound; sorrows that tears are the symptoms of, but the faint relief, shall never be there. Heartquakes, worse than earthquakes, shall be no more. There are secret places in human hearts on which shadows lie cold and dark, ineffaceable till they are dispersed by the sunburst of high eternal noon. On many a noble spirit, thrown into uncongenial circumstances, sorrow lies like an avalanche, that no sunbeam touches and no warmth dissolves. Those ideals of excellence we had formed, and learnt how feeble we were by failing to realize them, will all be actualized then. It has been said—

> "Man to man was never known;
> Heart to heart did never meet;
> We are columns left alone
> Of a temple once complete."

But if any of you feel this shadow, or wander thus in the desert, or taste this bitter grief, to you I say: "Let not your hearts be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." Evil shall not have the mastery; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. The tides of evil steadily ebb; the great spring-tide of light, and love, and peace as steadily advances; all things shall be made new; a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, comes nearer every day; and with righteousness that dwelleth there, her sisters, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, will be there also.

There will be "no more sea." Many have been perplexed and puzzled by this feature; and some writers on this very prophecy have come to the conclusion that the sea will be annihilated; that it is not needed in the millennial state; and it will therefore dry up. I agree very heartily with a Collect in the Church of England service, one amid many very beau-

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tiful, which begins thus: "O God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made." "The sea is his and he made it." If God hates nothing he has made, he will destroy nothing that he has made, and therefore the sea will not be destroyed. The expression "no more sea" is equivalent to no more night. If this earth is to continue a round orb there will be night and day: by shifting the angle of inclination of the earth, it is possible that might be modified immensely: but still by the very necessity of the thing there will be light and shadow, there will be night and day; only that perhaps the glory that lights it up with surpassing splendour will shine, as it did on Mount Tabor, with effulgence so intense that the very sun will be put out by its brightness, as a star is put out by the sunrise, and so there will be no more night. "There will be no more sea," may mean, that with the first heaven and first earth that passed away the first sea passes away too, and therefore that what has happened to the ocean of evil or of calamity through man's sin will then be put an end to. The extinction of the sea we think would be sad. To extinguish that magnificent thing that like a shining and glorious circle, or zone, surrounds the earth, would be a great and apparently needless calamity. There is something unspeakably grand in the sea, with its bays, its headlands, its promontories, and shelving sands, and flowing and ebbing tides. It is impossible to forget that dull sound—that moaning dirge heard all night, as if it were the cry of some stricken and sorrowing creature, like all the sounds of nature, in the minor key. At times it wakes into its thunder-roll, when it smites the shore, and recoils in music magnificent as the jubilee of a mighty multitude that no man can number. Nor can one fail to admire that ceaseless oscillation of its unquiet bosom, more like the pulse of life than mere mechanical motion, or when the tide rises with its peculiar sound as the waves strike the shore, and again retire, taking into the sea's hospitable bosom shells and living things innumerable from the sand. The interchange of

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lights and interplay of sounds in the ocean are so impressive and beautiful that few would like to part with that noble portion of creation, the sea; nor is there reason to conclude it will be destroyed.

"The ocean looketh up to heaven
As 'twere a living thing;
The homage of its waves seems given
In ceaseless worshipping.

"They kneel upon the sloping sand,
As bends the human knee;
A beautiful and tireless band,
The priesthood of the sea."

What then is meant by the expression, "There shall be no more sea?" It means a new sea, just as there is a new earth. The sea shall no more be agitated by the breath of the tempest, and lashed into fury, so as to obstruct the intercourse and endanger the safety of mankind. Whatever miracles Christ wrought were redemptive and restorative; and each was so far an earnest of the full accomplishment of what he will achieve at last. Thus, when he raised the dead, it was an earnest of that day when all the dead shall be raised; when he opened the eyes of the blind, it was an earnest of that era when all eyes shall see, and none shall be sealed; when he walked upon the sea, may it not be also a redemptive act and a prophecy that as he in our very humanity walked upon the bosom of the ocean, and found it a smooth and beautiful promenade, that we too shall do so? And when he laid his hand upon the ocean's mane, as a rider lays his hand upon the neck of his steed and quiets it, and the sea became a great calm —may not that be an earnest of the day when he will wave his hand over its restless waste of waters, and it will become still as an infant sleeping in its first cradle? Jesus walking on the sea, Jesus calming the sea, Jesus frequently sleeping and sailing on the sea, may all be the earnests of the healing of the sea. Like the heavens, it will be made new by being purified, like the earth, by being disinfected of evil, and so shall be earth's grandest zone, and nature's beautiful and most impressive

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object. It will be no more the burial-place of nations. What a churchyard, if I may use the expression, has the great ocean become! It is the burial-ground of mankind. The poor invalid going to breathe the air of a balmier land dies, and is buried in the ocean's depths; the emigrant ship, with those who have bid farewell to the blue hills and the homesteads of their native land, founders at sea, and that ship sinks—the silent coffin of hundreds. The sailor drops from the mast, and the sea becomes his grave, and the sea-weed his shroud, and the ceaseless chimes of the waves his requiem. But, glorious thought! the sea shall give up its dead; not a redeemed Christian sleeps in its silent depths who shall not hear the roll of the last trump; and if we are permitted to see the spectacle of the sheeted dead coming forth from the graves of a thousand years, what will be the grandeur of the spectacle of thousands of dead pouring up from the depths of the ocean, and ascending immediately to Him who is the resurrection and the life, and who liveth for ever and for ever! Very beautifully has one sung of the sea in these words. Mrs. Hemans says:—

"What wealth untold,
Far down, and shining through its stillness lies!
Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
Won from ten thousand royal argosies.
Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main!
Earth claims not these again.
Give back the lost and lovely!—those for whom
The place was kept at board and hearth so long;
The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
And the vain yearning woke 'midst festal song!
Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'erthrown;
But all is not thine own.
To thee the love of woman hath gone down;
Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head,
O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flowery crown;
Yet must thou hear a voice—Restore the dead!
Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee—
Restore the dead, thou Sea!"

When all these then shall be restored, and the mists swept off the Eden of the earth, God's voice will be

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heard in the murmuring brooks, in the resounding waves of the deep, in the hum of insects and in the song of birds; and the blessedness of earth shall shade away into the blessedness of heaven, and the glory of time into the richer glory of eternity; and this earth shall lift up its head, crowned as never queen was crowned before; and sun, and stars, and sea, and rivers shall be her bridesmaids, singing with her the bridal song of Moses and the Lamb. "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will to men," will be no longer a prophecy sung by a handful of angels on the plains of Bethlehem, but an anthem peal lifted up by the voices of a great multitude that no man can number. Then heaven and earth shall be reunited and restored as one. At present there is a gap between them: the instant that sin struck it, God withdrew; but as soon as the Gospel was preached in Eden, links of union were restored; Jacob saw angels ascending and descending from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven. Abraham was visited by troops of angels. Bishop Pearson, who writes a magnificent treatise on the Creed, and was one of the most powerful intellects that ever appeared in any church, thinks that even now the communion of saints, in consequence of Christ's resurrection and ascension, is not a mere imagination, but a reality; and he thinks those that have gone before may visit us on earth, and though we do not see them, yet they may know what is being transacted here. He says: "I have conversed with a saint as such when he lived on earth; I must still have communion with him when he is departed hence; because the foundation of that communion cannot be destroyed by death."

His idea is not that we are to worship them; not perhaps that we hear or see them; but that they have communion with us, on this ground—that they are equally members of Christ's body; that they are equally knit together in the same union, communion, and fellowship; and that what separates us from our children, our fathers, and our mothers, and our sisters, and our brothers who have left us, is no vast space or chasm

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it will take years to cross. Heaven at present is simply a condition. The redeemed are now not in another place so much as in another condition. There is one instance in Scripture where the redeemed in heaven speak down to listening pilgrims upon earth; it is at the close of this book: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." He refers to the church in heaven calling down the steeps of time to the church upon earth, and saying, Come; come up and taste our joy, and join our fellowship, and so restore the communion that has been broken and interrupted. Perhaps those that have left us may sometimes listen on the other side of the veil, if they can hear what we are saying; they may sometimes gaze with longing eyes in order to see what those they still love and whom they have left behind are doing; and if they do not see, or if they cannot hear, angels, who are ceaselessly descending and ceaselessly ascending, must tell them in heaven many an interesting and bright story of sublime transformations on earth. There are angels in every sanctuary; angels perhaps go with us to our homes; an angel sometimes whispers to you in the counting-house, or place of business, in the market, and on the streets—"are they not ministering spirits," that is, helps, "to them that are the heirs of salvation?" But that communion which was once so complete has been broken; it is conjecture, not certainty, how far the lower and upper worlds may meet and mingle. Perhaps as sea and land interlace, the world of spirits and the world of those who are in the flesh may intermingle also. We are now in the cold, gloomy crypt; they are above the crypt, in the sunny, beautiful, and glorious cathedral. We too, if we are saved now, shall be raised, and glorified, and mingle our songs and our voices with theirs; and so be for ever with the Lord.

Do you ever look off this cold, shattered, gloomy world, even in its sunniest spots and in its most festal hours, to yon bright, beautiful, and glorious world that we can see through the telescope that John has given us in Patmos? Surely, surely we are not so happy that we can afford to lose such a spring of happiness as the hope

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of glorious things in reversion. If you are heir to estates, or to a grand historic title, do you not frequently look up from your present condition to what you have in prospect? and do you not draw from the future thoughts of joy into the gloomy and the sorrowful present? What is this apocalyptic picture given for? Is it a mere piece of poetry? Is it a mere sketch to amuse? No; it consists of flowers gathered from your own happy, happy land. It is laden with the fragrance of roses, that sin has not blighted, and that evil has not blasted. It is a handful of its sunshine, given to warm cold hearts, and to brighten dark minds, and so straggling hopes will be cheered, and drooping hearts encouraged to lean upon the hope of that rest that remaineth for the people of God. All men have plenty during the week to plague them; and therefore hundreds come within the walls of the sanctuary thankful that the weary six days of the week are over. You do not want metaphysics, or mere speculative, hair-splitting controversies. You need refreshment and rest. Harassed, and balked, and fretted, and disappointed, and sick of this world's conflict, it is not useless to learn the sublime lesson: "Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

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LECTURE XV.

THE APOCALYPTIC CITY.

As the seer individualizes the objects he has grouped together, we see more clearly the splendid attractions of the future. Here "the city" comes into view.

"*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*"—REVELATION xxi. 2.

WE have concluded, in common with those who have a claim to be among the wisest and the soberest interpreters of the prophetic record, that the earth on which we live, with all its encompassing economy, is not, as Satan would have it, and as false prophets sometimes predict it will be, to be so consumed and dissipated as to leave but the baseless fabric of a vision; but that it is to be, as God's word seems clearly to indicate, regenerated, restored, reconstructed, covered with a lustre before which the lustre of ancient Paradise shall pale; and invested with a beauty eye hath not seen, and resonant with a joy which ear hath not heard, and the subject of a transformation which heart hath not conceived; and which it has not even been a prophet's privilege or evangelist's inspiration fully to embody and to express. The very essence of Christianity, so far as it deals with what is external to man, is the annihilation of nothing, and the consecration and the regeneration of all. Whatever God made is redeemed, and shall be restored. Whatever Satan has introduced shall be handed over to Satan, and made a present to him for ever. God made the earth beautiful, and holy, and good; and the dim memorials that survive are faint, faint reminiscences of

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a glory and a beauty that perished that hour in which Eve and Adam sinned against God. Even in our cold summers, when the earth is bursting into bloom, it seems as if it strove to reach the glory it once had, and to anticipate that greater glory which one day it shall wear; when it covers itself with all sweet flowers, and fills the air, the delighted air, with their perfume, and charms the delighted eye with their beauty. I know but two things upon earth in their nature not moral that remind me of ancient Paradise; the beautiful but fading flowers of June, and the bright diamonds and precious stones, those amaranthine flowers, that do not wither or die. These seem the memorials of Paradise; perhaps spared to us in God's great love to remind us what a splendid estate sin lost; but prophecies to us of a yet more splendid inheritance to which Christ the Saviour will introduce us.

Having spoken of the earth and its economy as destined to continue, we read here of something that descends and settles upon the earth; it comes down in its completeness from heaven, and remains upon the earth, what it will be for ever, the metropolis of Christendom. In one of Dr. Chalmers' magnificent sermons he has tried to show the great moral significance of this earth of ours. Some sceptic astronomers have talked about it as so tiny a speck that it is impossible to believe that God ever could have become incarnate and died for it. It is so little that he might have expunged it, and it never would have been missed amidst the starry orbs of the universe. He says very justly that material mass is not the test and the criterion of moral importance. We believe a very limited spot may be fraught with everlasting issues. That hill called Calvary is a little hill in Jerusalem, and on it there was erected a cross—two cross beams of no value; but what a glorious spot is that! a spot to which countless orbs will look in concentric circles, and marvel at the love that gave a Christ to die, and marvel more at the love that hung upon that cross, and died even for his enemies. Westminster Palace is a very splendid building; though, as if to show how all

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things must fade and die, it is no sooner built and its beauty perfected than decay has set upon it—as if to teach man that he cannot in this world create a permanent structure; that earth's noblest edifices, the world's most magnificent cathedrals, are the tents of a day, not the mansions that endure for ever and ever. At Westminster the interests of the world are transacted. Six or seven hundred noblemen and gentlemen meet together in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons; they seem to be, some of them, not very anxious, nor very much in earnest, nor very grave; but upon the votes of those noblemen and gentlemen depend peace or war, the prosperity or the ruin of empires; and out of that House which does not cover many acres, go forth words, winged words, that convulse cabinets, shake nations, or give confidence to royal and troubled breasts; showing us that a very small material space may be the repeating centre of very momentous and enduring consequences. In the same manner this small earth may be the orb, that shall itself occupy the largest interest in the minds of the inhabitants of myriads of worlds. Countless orbs, with their countless inhabitants, will for ever and ever look down upon this very earth; and they will see in it themes that never part with their freshness; reminiscences that never can be obliterated, associations that will waken their hearts, and give them new songs, and stir their deepest sympathies, and that for ever and for ever. The truth is, this earth of ours is the most intensely interesting spot in the whole universe. I never can believe that the soil which a Saviour trod, that the scene on which a Saviour died, that the spot on which a Saviour was born—places so intensely interesting—are to be effaced; and that the devil, who extinguished the beauties of Paradise, shall be suffered to efface and annihilate the scenes that tell the story of Paradise regained. I believe that in the centre of this there will be one spot yet richer and more glorious than all; it is here called "a city," the "new Jerusalem;" "a kingdom that cannot be moved;" "an inheritance incorruptible;" "a house not made with hands." It is

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most interesting to trace throughout the Scripture the outlines of the vast space occupied by the hopes, or the tidings, or the predictions of a city. Jerusalem, the ancient, the beautiful, the burden of prophecy, the key-note of song; whose streets were trodden by kings' and prophets' feet, and trodden yet more by the feet of Him who is King of kings—Jerusalem, the roofs of which sheltered David, and David's greater and more kingly Son; from the springs of which Jesus drank; the sins of which he so touchingly rebuked, and the fate of which he pronounced from the Mount of Olives, amid tears such as never fell upon the pavement of city, or capital, or hamlet—Jerusalem has sunk like a ship in full sail at sea, and all its magnificence is a thing of the past; and as if to show the extent, and depth, and greatness of the desolation, the mosque of Omar stands where the temple of Solomon was; and the cry of the Muezzin, "Great is God, and Mahomet is his prophet," is heard where the strains of David's harp broke upon the air, and where the magnificent Psalms that David's God inspired were sung by the sweet singers of the house of Israel. Never did a more beautiful creation appear on the earth than Jerusalem, and never did a doom so terrible, so swift, so desolating, overtake a city upon earth. That must be no ordinary city the very stones of which at this day are kissed daily by grey-haired rabbis, while they sing the words—

> "Thy saints take pleasure in its stones;
> Its very dust to them is dear;"

the reminiscences of which walk the earth, and appear in all lands like spectral spirits that will not be laid; "the city of the Great King; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth;" of which, says David, "glorious things have been spoken." Was that city a naked, dry, unsuggestive historical fact, or was it the shadow of good things to come; the type of a vision yet more beautiful, but as material, as real, as the type that has passed away? My impression is that it was. Let us mark well in Scripture the allusions to this city.

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In Galatians we read: "Jerusalem which is above is free, the mother of us all." In the Hebrews we read: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and to an innumerable company of angels." We read, again, of Abraham: "he looked for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God." We read in Hebrews: "God hath prepared for them a city." And the apostle, speaking of our relationship to it, says, "Your conversation is in heaven." The word "conversation" is an unhappy translation; it is the old Saxon word, meaning not *talking*, but *citizenship;* the literal translation is, "Your citizenship is in heaven." If you blot out the word "conversation" in your Bible, and put in "citizenship," you have the exact and true idea. So, again, says the apostle: "Ye are fellow-citizens of the saints, and of the household of faith." You will bear with me while I read, because it is more magnificent than anything I can say, the picture of this city in the 21st chapter of Revelation, in which you will see there a minuteness of detail, an architectural minuteness of specification, which it would be very difficult to construe into a mere figure of speech. It begins at the 10th verse of the 21st chapter of Revelation: "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high"—now mark the architectural minuteness, the minutiæ of the plan; such minutiæ as seem to me unjustifiable if it be a mere figure of speech—"and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel; on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden

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reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth; and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Then rising from the sketch that the inspired architect lays down to the strain that an inspired poet alone can give expression to, he says: "And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth"—which shows that kings shall be existing when this is actualized—"the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for"—and exquisite touch—"there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The question—we may well ask—is, is all this a myth? Is it a mere figure of speech, and nothing more? If I were one of the Essayists and Reviewers I should be bound

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by the logic of my position to pronounce it a mere myth —with them everything is a myth that we hold in the Bible to be a reality—and I should not be surprised if the seven Essayists should ultimately accept the notion of the celebrated Irish bishop, Bishop Berkeley, who believed that there was no such thing as matter; and that what we see, and handle, and touch, and taste, and feel, are merely ideas; and that we live in an ideal, not material world. The bishop was a logician, and he argued, as bishops sometimes can, logically; but the Essayists are illogical when they say things that are realities are myths, and doctrines on which the strain of our eternal hopes lies are merely figures of speech. Such suggestions as the following seem to me to show it is not so. I have demonstrated, as I think clearly, that the earth is to be renewed; that just as the soul has its regeneration, and as the body has its resurrection, so the earth will have what our Lord calls its παλιγγενεσια, its new birth. The baptism of the last fire shall destroy all that is impure, and the consecrating touch of the Great High Priest shall restore to it all the beauty it has lost, and more than the blessedness it ever had. There is to be a material earth, and we are to be raised with material bodies. I believe the resurrection to be, not a myth, but a reality; and that these very bodies, as I have often urged, disinfected of all that is impure, deprived of all that is imperfect, and made holy, and perfect, and complete, shall be raised; and the infant that you lost, and the parent that you buried, and those near and dear ones that passed into the shadow of death, shall come forth, retaining all their characteristic features, all the identities by which they were distinguished by you; so that the future will be the happy home, the gathering place, the scene of reunion, the restoration of ties that have been snapped and separations that have been bewailed; the meeting-place of all the people of God. If this earth is thus to be restored, and these bodies thus to be rebuilt, is there anything absurd in the supposition that there will be a material city, a material temple?

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Is there anything absurd in the beautiful thought that earth shall be spoiled of its most precious stones, robbed of its most beautiful things, in order to adorn the palace and be the foundations of the city of the Great King, that city which has foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God? I remember reading in a poet who sings many things very sweetly that precious stones are all of them the fragments of the great explosion in Paradise created by sin; and that they are the remains of what once was universal, now the possession of a few—then the fabric and the foundations of the glory of the earth itself. The philosopher's stone, which turned everything to gold, was a fancy, a dream; but I am not sure that there are not in the common clay, and in the earth that we turn up, latent all the materials of a metallic and mineral beauty of which we have no conception. Out of the common clay we can bring a precious metal, and perhaps the grains and fragments of the pristine glory may be all intermingled with the decay and débris that has subsequently arisen; and that the last fire shall burn the dross, while the beautiful, the permanent, the Divine, shall appear in more than its ancient lustre. Is there therefore anything unworthy of the Great King, or unworthy of God, in this restoration of all things, when ruby, and diamond, and chalcedony, and amethyst, and sapphire, shall not be tiny sparkles set by the jeweller in gold for noble hands to wear and kingly eyes to prize, but shall appear in rocks grander than the Pyramids, and resplendent with a beauty and a glory of which we have but a dim and imperfect conception now? Men are beset with the foolish notion that such things are altogether unworthy of God. Then it was unworthy of God to make the earth at all; it was unworthy of God to make precious stones at all, or to make the stars—those orbs that are sprinkled over the plains of infinitude, to our eyes like shining tiny lights; worlds, with different density to ours, but still worlds of matter. Herschel and the great astronomers of our age can positively weigh them; they can tell you the weight of Jupiter, or Saturn, or Venus, or the

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moon; they can tell you its density and size; they can demonstrate to you it is matter. And many of these orbs may be the abodes of people that have never fallen; but whether they be so or not, they were made by God; and if it is not unworthy of God to make a world of matter, and to shape it into all its beautiful developments as the potter shapes the clay, is it unworthy of a God who has redeemed the soul, and no less redeemed the body, to redeem the earth, and reconsecrate and reconstitute it in more than its pristine magnificence and glory?

But I will not dwell upon the mere materialism of the picture. The future may be a world of sense, but not a world of sensuality; that is, it may be matter, and yet nothing corrupt, imperfect, or impure. I will therefore draw from this picture the ideas that cluster about it, and are suggested by it. The very first idea suggested by a city is that of permanency. At present we dwell in tents. The noblest edifice in London is but a transient tent; all its gilding must fade, all its magnificence must depart, and the ploughshare pass over its ruins; and if spared to the last day it must crumble and be calcined by the action of the last fire. The cities of this dispensation have been sacked by conquerors, or deserted by their people, or gulped down by earthquakes, or decimated by plague, and pestilence, and decay. But here we are taught to look for a city that no conqueror can sack; over which no pestilence may shake its wings; which no earthquake shall destroy, which no time can wear down; whose streets shall be beaten by no weary feet; whose inhabitants, countless as the sands, shall have no breaking hearts; whose air shall be torn by no storms; and into whose magnificent and holy dwelling-places no sin, or death, or disease, or decay, shall ever be allowed to penetrate. We have therefore the idea of perpetuity or of permanency suggested by the city. And the second idea perhaps suggested is that of immunity or safety. You remember the story of the city of refuge; a type of what Christ was to be—the instant that the guilty

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homicide got within its walls, that instant he was safe from the pursuing avenger. So the instant that the sinner has fled to Christ, he is safe from the curse and the condemnation of sin. And so this city may suggest the thought of perfect immunity; that is, no danger shall enter it, no enemy shall touch it; no secret poison in the air, or in the waters, or in its bread, shall be there; no storm shall strike it, nothing can injure them; for there shall be no tears, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor death. And there shall be no misapprehension nor mistake: "there shall be no night there." And one beautiful thought, when first looked at apparently a sad one, but on consideration a sublime one: "I saw no temple therein." Now earth is the temple of God; then God will be the temple of the earth. "I saw no temple therein," means no division, no distinction, no denominational features; the whole earth encaustic tile, the whole surface tessellated pavement—not tile, not tessellated pavement, but the ruby, and the chalcedony, and the sapphire, and the topaz, and the diamond, and the amethyst; and all space holy, and all hours canonical; Christ the high altar; its roof the majesty of the Eternal; its worshippers a mighty multitude redeemed out of every kindred, and every people, and every tongue, that no man can number.

But I pass on to a third thought suggested by a city, namely, that of society. There is in the Creed a clause, a suggestive clause, "the communion of saints." The future is to be a social place. This city is not to consist of tiers of cells, cold, insulated, disconnected with each other, like the cells of prisoners undergoing solitary confinement. What a miserable idea of heaven that would be! it would be enough to make people shrink from the hope of it, and to disregard the belief of it as comfort. In this future city, there are no monks, nor nuns, nor anchorites, but the chiefest of sinners that washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The song that is sung there is not a poor thin solo; it will be the harmony of ten thousand times ten thousand voices, like the noise of many waters, say-

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ing: "Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." "Ye are come," says the apostle, "to the general assembly of the church of the first born." But then, there will be no division. In the 10th chapter of the Gospel of St. John, our Lord says: "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold," Αυλη; "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one"—it is in our translation, unhappily, "fold;" but in the last line of the verse, it is not Αυλη, but Ποιμνη; which means "a flock;" so that the idea conveyed is that there will then be what we believe will be, all sheep pens, no more with demarcations and divisions, but lost in the universal flock; all congregations constituting one church, all houses constituting one city—the communion of saints, the company of all that believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The idea of a city suggests to us the thought of reunion; and that is a very sweet and a precious thought. The countenances we loved have changed; ties that were nearest and dearest have been dissolved; and voices that rung as sweet chimes in our ears, if to the ear of no one else, are hushed till the roll of the last trump. But all the wounds of death shall one day be completely effaced; all the spoils of the grave shall become the trophies of the Lord Jesus Christ; all blanks in your broken circles shall be filled up; all blots on your memories shall be obliterated. At present we see with sadness the sundering of family bonds, the cancelling of the dear realities of home, and the diminishing of the orb of affection into a waning crescent, a wasting shadow. All this is by reason of sin, and sin alone; but all shall be reversed; and the lights that were quenched by your hearth shall be rekindled, and burn and shine with a splendour that shall have no shadow and with a glory that shall have no end.

The next thought suggested by the idea of a city is that of unity. Here there are not only distinctions, but there are differences. There are not only distinctions which beautify the church, and the family, but

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there are differences that disturb the church and sometimes rend the family. On that day, in that city, these will all be resolved; and though we shall not be the fac-similes of each other—I can conceive nothing more monotonous than for two people intimately and closely associated who exactly think the same things, and speak in the same way, and rarely differ, or look at things from a different stand-point and in a different light—there may be all the perfection of unity with nothing of the deformity of unison. But what is the highest unity? Each developing his own part, and yet harmony resulting from the whole. Abraham, from the land of Ur of the Chaldees, will be there; Job, from his eastern plains, will be there; John from his Patmos, and Peter from his martyr's grave will be there; Luther, whose dead dust sleeps in the church of Wittenberg, will be there; and Ridley and Latimer, who cheered each other at the stake; the one saying to the other, what was prophecy and not fancy, "Be of good cheer, brother Ridley, for we shall this day by God's grace light such a candle in England as shall never be put out;" and Knox, who feared not the face of clay, and spake to princes as he spake to the meanest of the people—all these we shall meet in that city that hath foundations. The babes of Bethlehem—Rachel no more weeping because they are not, but thanking God because they are—and the last-gathered flowers of our day, shall all be there. Patriarchs, apostles, and saints, and prophets, shall be there; all who have carried the world's burden on their souls, and received its scars upon their hearts; all who have worked for its highest interest and died for its greatest good, shall be there, fellow-citizens with the saints, and heirs of the kingdom of God. And methinks Adam and Eve—and this is not a fancy, but sober fact—will tell us the story of their fall; and Abraham will rehearse the story of his wanderings; and Job will give us the autobiography of his life upon those eastern plains; and Peter and Paul, and all whose names have become sacred but household words, I shall meet as sure as there is a God in

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heaven, and we shall talk long and sweetly together. And what a happy reunion, what a blessed fellowship, what an interesting intercourse will be that, when all is transparent, and all imperfections are gone, and we shall know as we are known, and love as we are loved, and that for ever and for ever!

The next idea suggested by a city is not only union or unity, but catholicity; that is to say, there shall be but one church, and no distinction. I need not remark that the names by which churches are distinguished upon earth are all human; the Episcopal church is not in the Bible, nor is the Presbyterian church, nor is the Congregational church. Pastors and people are in the Bible; all else is conventional and for convenience. But here I have met with people so bigoted that they positively believe that there is no worship where there is no liturgy; and among my own countrymen people just as bigoted, who think that with a Prayer-book and an organ it is a pure impossibility to offer anything like worship. I believe as spiritual prayers as ever rose from earth to heaven have risen by the help of the Church of England Prayer-book; and I believe that many formal, dead, dull, cold and freezing prayers have been uttered by parish ministers in Scotland. It is not the form nor the absence of form; it is life in the heart; it is the praying heart, not the bowing knee; it is the earnest cry, not the words in which the cry is clothed; and perhaps the most fervent prayers that ever rose to heaven were never expressed by human words. There are yearnings in many a soul that he himself does not know the origin of—that he cannot embody in words; and these yearnings, inspired by God, rise to heaven, and bring down answers exceeding abundant above all that we can ask or think. And what are these answers? Angel messengers from heaven, neither few nor far between, to let us know what is in our Father's house; bits of its better bread, to let us taste what his bounty hath provided for us there; cupfuls of its living streams from its living fountains to refresh us in this weary world of ours. I

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marvel to myself that people do not long more to have missives and intimations from heaven, visitants from above. I was reading the other day that on the shores of the Adriatic Sea the wives of fishermen, whose husbands have gone far off upon the deep, are in the habit at eventide of going down to the sea-shore, and singing, as female voices only can, the first stanza of a beautiful hymn; after they have sung it they listen, till they hear borne by the wind across the desert sea the second stanza, sung by their gallant husbands as they are tossed by the gale upon the waves, and both are happy. Perhaps if we could listen we too might hear on this desert world of ours some sound, some whisper borne from afar, to remind us that there is a heaven and a home; and when we sing the hymn upon the shores of earth, perhaps we shall hear its sweet echo breaking in music upon the sands of time, and cheering the hearts of them that are pilgrims and strangers, and look for a city that hath foundations. It is the din and the noise of this world that keep us from hearing the harmony and the sound of a better and a brighter world. And it is in trying to make these sounds audible that I reproduce these beautiful sketches in God's most blessed and cheering book. In the daytime you may walk up and down the Strand, or you may drive down Piccadilly, and still you do not hear the sound of the Westminster clock. But when the wind blows across your house in the deep silence of the night, you can hear its chief bell, with its deep muffled boom. Why do we hear it at night? Because the roar, and the din, and the tumult of this great city of ours is hushed. What is the reason that we do not distinctly hear the chimes of heaven; that we rarely hear the music of the skies? We do not listen. We are so enamoured of the noise and the roar of this world that we cannot hear the harmony and the chimes of the better world. The din and noise of London keeps us from hearing the Westminster bell, and the din and noise of the world keep us from hearing the chimes of heaven; while some people, as in Manchester, have cotton in their ears, which keeps out

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as effectually the sweet sound that would otherwise be music to their hearts. If we could hush the din, and the noise, and the absorbing tumult of this world, we too should hear something of that better land from the belfries of that great city that hath foundations. It is called the city of the Great King; the new Jerusalem; it is said to have the glory of God. That word translated from the Hebrew would be the translation of the word *shechinah*. There was a glory shone on the mount, in the burning bush; there was the glory that shone in the pillar of fire by night in the desert; and that same glory, which was the glory of God, rested between the cherubim on the mercy-seat in the temple. Now this city is said to have the glory of God; when that living glory shall be reflected from the blue sapphire, from the green emerald, from the dark-red sardonyx, from the deep-red jacinth, from the violet amethyst, from the pale topaz, and from the flashing diamond; no longer in fragments, but in quarried rocks high as cathedrals, massive as the Pyramids, what a flood of splendour will pour from that bright city whose foundations are these precious stones! how justly may we expect it has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, nor of the stars! because all the light that they yield will be paled beside the intensity of that brighter light that never shall be extinguished, that glory that shall never die.

Are we citizens of that city? If we are, let us rejoice that our heritage is sure, that our destiny is certain.

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LECTURE XVI.

THE CITIZENS OF THE NEW JERUSALEM.

WE instinctively turn from the glorious outlines of "the city" to the character and condition of its living inmates, whose citizenship is there.

"*And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*" — REVELATION xxi. 2.

I ENDEAVOURED in the course of my previous lecture to show that the new heavens and the new earth do not mean another physical economy substituted for the economy that now is, but that their restoration is to the earth and the heavens just what the resurrection is to the human body—the regenesis, the renewal of all that has gone wrong, and the purification of all that has been tainted by sin, imperfection, and death. I have tried to show what is meant by this splendid vision that descends from the heaven and settles on the earth in a form that cannot fail and with a glory that cannot die, characterized by a beauty that no inspired pen is able to delineate: "the new Jerusalem," "the city that hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God." I noticed in the course of my remarks the singular fact that from Genesis to Revelation—that is, for a period of upwards of 4000 years—Christians, whether of the dawn, or of the sunrise, or of the noon, always anticipated some satisfaction upon earth in the shape of "a city." Abraham looked for a city—a city that hath foundations; and it is said of God: "He hath prepared for them a city." And here we have the prediction and the promise translated into fact; and the vision of the

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Apocalypse sure to be the realization of the future; a city descending upon the earth that hath foundations—new Jerusalem, the vision of peace; all splendour, beauty, magnificence and glory; richer and more beautiful than a bride prepared for her husband; never more to wane with years, or to waste by trouble, or to cease to be the central metropolis of the universe; what Jerusalem was in type she is to be in reality, the beauty and the joy of the whole earth.

I will refer in this lecture to the inhabitants of this city, or the citizens that shall be in it. I dare not pronounce who shall not be in it; but I can pronounce with all the certainty of an oracle who shall be its citizens. Exclusion is the awful prerogative of Deity; recognition of excellence is the joy, the happiness, and the delight of a Christian. Who shall never be there it is not for us to say; who shall be there God has written in his own inspired and blessed record. Let me then begin at the beginning, and trace the bright and shining footsteps upon the sands of time of those who have left this world, and are now in hope or in reversion citizens of that heavenly city. Adam and Eve, the father and the mother of us all, created in innocence by nature; fallen by sin, redeemed by sovereign grace and infinite love—these twain look back; and even in heaven, one would suppose, they must be humbled when they think that they are the first links of a long chain of sorrowing and suffering men; and yet they must rejoice and be thankful when they recollect that if they introduced sin, and with sin death, the Second Adam introduced almost cotemporaneously righteousness, and with righteousness life; and that all that believe in the Second Adam, however involved in the calamities of the first, shall never taste the bitterness of the second death, but shall be citizens of no mean city, the heirs of the vision of peace, and of that heritage that remains for all the people of God. We are sure that Adam and Eve are there; they were the first Christians upon earth. It is a mistake to suppose that Christianity began 1800 years ago; it began nearly 6000 years ago; it was

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preached amid the wrecks of Eden; it was sealed amidst the sufferings of Gethsemane; it shall be enjoyed throughout the ages of eternity to come; and Adam and Eve, the first, shall see and mingle with the last Christian company upon earth, and be citizens of that city that cometh down from heaven. Let me turn to the second link in the same grand chain. Abel is there. Abel was the second Christian, but he was the first martyr upon earth. I have often thought that it was just the distinctive truth of atoning and meritorious sacrifice that distinguished Abel's creed from the creed of Cain. I have no doubt if one had been called upon to say, being cotemporaneous with these brothers, which was the most lovely and the most beautiful offering; if we had no light from the Bible we should at once have said Cain's. Both recognised the duty and the privilege of worship; both came and offered what they believed to be the expression of their adoration to the living and the true God. Wherein lay the difference? When Cain came in that first morning the clouds of which had scarcely begun to gather, and the light of which had scarcely yet begun to grow dim, he selected the loveliest flowers that grew under the shadow of the walls of Paradise; flowers that still retained something of the lingering perfume and unextinguished loveliness of Eden before sin blighted all—he bound these flowers into a beautiful *bouquet;* he laid it on the altar of his Creator and his God; and if one might interpret the feelings of Cain by language which must express substantially what was his real feeling, he must have prayed to God in some such way as this: O Thou who art the Creator of heaven and of earth, thou madest all things, and all things bear the impress of thy majesty, thy goodness, and thy power; these flowers I have gathered from the earth thou madest; thy smiles gave to every flower its exquisite tints; thy breath, blessed Lord, gave to the rose and the violet their unrivalled perfume; I have gathered them on thy earth; and I dedicate, and devote, and offer them to thee; recog-

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nizing thee as the Creator, and the Governor, and the Ruler of all for ever and ever. Amen. What was the result? The flame from heaven blasted the offering, and Cain retired a rejected offerer from the presence of God. But when Abel brought his offering, what did he do? Abel selected, now, what *à priori* or on first impressions would be most unacceptable; he brought an innocent lamb from the midst of his flock; he plunged the knife in its throat—a repulsive and painful act; he shed its blood and poured it out before the altar, on which he laid the victim, where it was consumed to ashes; and as the smoke rose in curling waves upward to the skies, he prayed in some such style as this: Blessed Lord, along with my brother Cain I own thee as Creator, I adore thee as Preserver; but I go further than my brother Cain; I feel that I have sinned, that I have lost thine image; that I am guilty before thee; and I know that without shedding of blood there is no remission; and I believe that only through the shedding of the blood of that Lamb slain from the foundation of the world can I have pardon and peace. Therefore, blessed Lord, I shed the blood of this lamb in token that I ought to die; but I offer this lamb as a sacrifice in prefiguration of the sacrifice of which thou didst tell my broken-hearted father and sorrowing mother in the midst of Paradise, the woman's seed that should bruise the serpent's head; and I ask thee to pity me and to pardon me, and if it please thee my brother Cain, as thou hast pardoned my father and my mother, through that precious blood which alone cleanseth from all sin. Abel's sacrifice rose to heaven like the ascending incense and perfume of an accepted heart; and Abel retired, a Christian worshipper of God and of the Lamb. Here then we have the two first public worshippers upon earth: Abel, the ancient martyr; Cain, the deceived and deluded worshipper. Cain I pass by in silence; Abel I am sure is a citizen of the new Jerusalem; an heir of that house not made with hands, which God himself hath provided. We come down the lapse of the ages, and we arrive at another illustrious

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citizen—Noah. And there is something interesting in mentioning and enumerating the citizens of that city. If you wish to see the beautiful catalogue, called by an ancient Christian the roll-call of the illustrious dead, read the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews; where each name is that of one that faithfully fought the good fight, and nobly and heroically fell. It is written in the annals of the French nation that a great soldier, the leader of her armies, fell in battle; but so revered was his name, so illustrious his deeds, that when the regimental roll was called his name was always called among the rest; and while each soldier answered to his name, there was a momentary silence when this name was called, till one answered for him: "Fallen upon the field of battle." In the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews we read of those that fell upon the field of battle; and inspiration answers for them that they were worthy of the cause and glorified the name that they sustained; that name which is above every name—the name of Christ. The third is Noah, a preacher, we are told, of righteousness; warning the people of that day of the approaching Flood; but, like all that speak from the prophetic record, despised, scoffed at, and derided, and waiting patiently for the hour when what he predicted should be fulfilled, and the Flood should cleanse an earth by its baptism that would not be reformed or purified by the teaching of Noah. He too is a citizen. Then we come to the great father of the faithful, who is said in the Epistle to the Hebrews to have "looked for a city;" stained by sin, branded on one occasion by equivocation, and yet in spite of all and surmounting all an heir of the righteousness which is by faith, and father of all the faithful. Then we come to Lot, in the midst of a wicked city, placed there not by God's providence, but by his own choice. If you are assigned a situation in the providence of God, there the same grace that placed you will strengthen and sustain you if you seek it. But if you go into a wicked place where Providence does not call you, you may be sustained—God forbid that I should

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limit his grace; but you have no reason to expect that it will be so. Lot went into a place not because it was the path of duty, but because he said it was "well watered," and there were plenty of flocks; and the din of its mills and the noise of its machinery were most pleasing, and suggestive of large per centage and of great and speedy returns; therefore he fixed upon Sodom as his dwelling-place; and from the day he did so till the day he fled, he "vexed his righteous soul with the filthy conversation" of those that were about him. And yet Lot, snatched by grace from the flame as a brand from the burning, is a citizen of the new Jerusalem. Another is David, the son of Jesse, the sweet singer of Israel. He was stained by a great crime, having become most guilty before God; but his guilt is not a precedent for us, but a beacon for all to avoid. If you can guarantee that with David's sin you shall also shed David's tears, and feel David's broken heart and David's deep penitence, then with David you may also sin; but as you have no such guarantee, you are to refer to his story, first, as a proof what great sin the greater mercy of our God may cover; secondly, as a proof that there is no perfect character upon earth till we come to Christ, the Prince of Peace; and third, as a beacon which you are to avoid, and to which you are to give a long and a large berth. Because David escaped there is not in that the necessary evidence that those who imitate his sin shall escape and not suffer shipwreck. Isaiah sees his splendid prophecies fulfilled, his glorious predictions all realized, and the light that lightens the Gentiles, the glory of his people Israel. There Jeremiah weeps no more over the sins and sorrows of a doomed and a guilty capital. Ezekiel beholds the temple the outlines of which he sketched, and he is satisfied. There Malachi sees that Sun rise that he predicted to arrive with healing under his wings, and rejoices in Him who is the light that lightens the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel.

If we come down to New Testament history we shall find other citizens of the same city. The evangelists,

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who wrote the words and portrayed the likeness of the Prince of Peace in his own light, are there. John sees realized the most splendid visions of the Apocalypse, and knows by happy experience that what the world calls the dreams of the visionary were the true and faithful records of the city of the living God. Paul, who persecuted the Christians and was forgiven; who was struck down by a splendour that was love as much as it was light; not worthy to be called an apostle, the least of saints, the chiefest of sinners, is now a citizen of no mean city. Peter too, who denied his Lord, and was so afraid of a maid servant's reproach that with an oath three times he declared he did not know him, is now not denied by him, but forgiven and made welcome to that city that hath foundations. The prodigal too has entered into the city, and there is no ill-natured, envious, bitter elder brother to grudge the reception of the dead made alive, and the welcome of the prodigal and the stranger brought home. There too is the publican, that stood afar off; no longer standing afar off, but introduced into the midst of the white-robed group in the presence of God and of the Lamb, and worshipping and serving him perpetually. There too is Mary, who finds in heaven what she believed on earth, that one thing was supremely needful. There too is Martha, who thought here that to be troubled about many things was her duty, and learns now that Mary her sister had chosen that better part. There too is Stephen, the protomartyr, who died looking to Jesus, and beholding the glory that was around his throne. There too is Mary Magdalene, that washed his feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, a worshipper before the throne. What a group is that! a group composed not of unfallen men, not of perfect saints, but of great sinners, the chiefest of sinners, the least of saints, some of them the worst of mankind; that it may be seen by you, and taken home to your poor desponding and dejected hearts as an encouragement to believe that for you there is pardon through precious blood, for you there is acceptance in

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Christ's righteousness; for you there is a perfect title to eternal joy.

If I leave the era of Scripture, and go down to those who succeed it, we shall find in that city Justin Martyr, who conversed with John; who wrote the most splendid defence of Christianity, addressed to Trypho the Jew; and who has now entered into rest. There too we shall find Polycarp, who when cast to the wild beasts, and told that he might save his life if he would deny Christ, replied in beautiful and memorable words: "For eighty-six years I have served him, and he has never done me wrong; why should I deny him now?" There too is Augustine, the most illustrious of all the evangelical writers of that era; who preached what is called Calvinism, now in contempt, but what he found to be living Christianity then. And there too is the Archbishop of Constantinople, with "the golden mouth;" whose orations live and are admired and loved by all that love precious truth, and rejoice that it is fully and faithfully preached. And there too is Jerome, the living proof upon earth that asceticism was not piety; and there too is Vigilantius his opponent, who forgives the sins of Jerome, and forgets the temper that he showed; because both held fast the foundation, Christ and him crucified. And if we come to later days, when the sky of Christendom was obscured by one dark cloud that rose from the swamps of Roman and mediæval superstition, we shall see stars in that sky that rose invisible then, but that now shine and set no more. First the illustrious Alcuin, who preached the Gospel when the Gospel had almost become a memory of the past; Claude of Turin, one of the most devoted and illustrious pastors of an era which possessed extremely few that were faithful; and Henri, another of the same period, faithful unto death, called the great Protestant of the middle ages; and Peter Waldo, from whose name the Waldenses were called, the shelter and protection of whom by Victor Emmanuel and his predecessors for many years is I believe one of the secrets of his prosperity, his success, and the blessings that rest upon his

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kingdom, and the hopes he cherishes—hopes that God grant may be realized—that Rome will be his capital, and a united Italy his people and his kingdom. When we come down from the middle ages to later times we shall find Wickliffe, the morning star as he was called of the Reformation in England, and who translated the Bible into our noble Saxon mother-tongue; who died at Lutterworth—a church tower I never pass upon the railway without thinking of his name and blessing his memory. His dead dust was exhumed from the grave, cast into the river Avon by the bigoted, and superstitious, and proscriptive priesthood; but in the words of one of our own poets—

> "The Avon to the Severn runs,
> The Severn to the sea;
> And Wickliffe's dust has spread abroad,
> Wide as the waters be."

They could not extinguish the truths he taught, though they could cast into the river the dust or rather the mantle he had left behind him. After him arose that great, brave, trumpet-tongued speaker of the era of the Reformation, the illustrious Martin Luther; whose sermons were described as cannon-balls; who spoke a great truth, and its echoes came back in crashes from the Vatican; whose memory will live in the hearts of those that know the truth and in the memories of those that revere the great, the good, the faithful, and the true. And his dead dust rests beneath the roof of the church of Wittenberg, in the hope, the certain hope of the resurrection, and his spirit now dwells in heaven, getting ready to enter that city that hath foundations; and soul and body shall be reunited, and dwell together in that city that cometh down from heaven, adorned as a bride adorned for her husband. And along with Martin Luther I must speak of one scarcely less illustrious than he, the amiable, the learned, the accomplished Melancthon; his name was originally Blackyird, but afterwards turned into the more euphonious name Melancthon, which is the Greek for the same thing. He

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was learned, amiable, gentle; and whenever Luther's temper was ruffled by his difficulties, a gentle word from Melancthon laid it; and when Luther's arsenal of arguments was exhausted, the profound learning of Melancthon supplied a new fact, or a new reason, or a more conclusive proof; and Luther used to refer back to "his dear Philip" as his tutor, his instructor, and the back-ground on which he could retire when anything on the part of his enemies seemed more than he could endure. After this we come to Ridley, burnt at the stake; and with Ridley the illustrious Latimer; the one, as the flames seized upon their limbs, comforting the other with the glorious words that ought to ring in the heart of every Protestant inextinguishable for ever: "Be of good cheer, dear brother; for we shall this day light such a candle in England as by God's grace never shall be put out." And after this the faithful Cranmer, who faltered for an hour, recovered the ground he had lost, and when tied to the stake thrust the hand that signed his recantation into the flames, blessed God for the grace that had kept him firm, and deplored the hour when for one moment his faith faltered and his love grew cold. Nor can I omit Knox, who never feared the face of clay; "whose sermons," said Scotland's Queen, "I dread more than the long bows of England." Every Englishman in those days who carried twelve arrows said he carried twelve Scotchmen's lives at his belt; and the long bows of England were the terror of the Scotch, just as the claymores of the Scotch were often the terror of the English. Knox, a man very much misrepresented, was by birth a gentleman, by education a scholar; but he lived in a rough and tempestuous age; and if he had not spoken strong words and said fearless things, he would have been no more felt than the zephyr is felt against the sails of the ship; his memory would have perished, and the good he accomplished never would have been done. And along with Knox there was one not less illustrious, Andrew Melville, one of the most amiable, gentle, and beautiful spirits that adorned an era of turmoil, of

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controversy, and of conflict. But while people blame the severity of Knox—and we admit he said very severe things—yet notwithstanding, it is fact that in England the rooks' nests were left, to use Knox's phrase, and the rooks have come back in flocks; but in Scotland not a nest was left that was not pulled down, and the rooks have not come back there. It is not true that Knox destroyed the cathedrals; he said of all the cathedrals, What superstition has desecrated, the faithful preaching of God's holy word consecrates; but the monasteries he did pull down, and he did well in pulling them down; and all the retreats of a superstitious, debased, and immoral priesthood he swept away; and, however æsthetic taste may mourn over the ruin of what was architecturally beautiful, Christian hearts must rejoice that the foul nests were destroyed, and that the rooks have never had an attraction strong enough to bring them from Rome to the grey moors, and the shaggy rocks, and the brown heath of Scotland.

If we come further down in the history of the world, to more recent times, we shall find other citizens no less illustrious. Let me mention among the first of these in France the illustrious and the evangelical Quesnel. Clement XI. fulminated a Bull, a practice which the Popes indulge in to the present day, denouncing the truths taught by him in 101 propositions selected from his writings. One of these propositions should never be forgotten, because though condemned by a Pope it will be recognized at the judgment-day. It was this: "The Church of Christ is the company of all Christians who are washed in the blood and who are trusting in the righteousness of Christ, who sleep in the bosom of the common Father, and who are looking forward to the glory that is to be revealed." Now of that beautiful truth, the very words of which are music, Pope Clement XI. said: "This is heresy, it smells of heresy, and is infected with heresy; we order it to be expunged; and we command the authorities to punish with the civil arms all that are guilty of acquiescing in such heresy as this." With him appears the celebrated Pascal, whose

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thoughts will live as long as the language in which they are expressed, and whose severe sarcasms on the Jesuits were provoked by their conduct, and deserved by the wickedness by which they were branded. But under the shadow of the Church of Rome we even find a few Christians. There are—never forget this—Papists in the Protestant Church; there are Protestants in the Church of Rome. There are men in the Church of England who subscribe its Articles, in it, not of it; there are men in the Church of Rome who wear its orders, in it, but not of it. Who can doubt that Massillon, who made the hearts and the consciences of royalty quake, was a Christian minister and a child of God? Who can doubt that Fénelon, the beautiful writer of the most exquisite and instructive tale that ever was written, was a Christian? They were men whose outer garments were singed by the fires of the apostacy; but whose hearts, and consciences, and intellects remained pure and true. Who can doubt that Martin Boos, who lived and died a priest in the Church of Rome, was in spite of so equivocal a relation a true Christian? And I have met myself in Paris, and even in England, priests and members of the Church of Rome, who show that, in spite of the enveloping superstition, there is a power and a majesty in God's truth that penetrates the darkness, and touches and transforms hearts in spite of all the circumstances by which they are surrounded. Mungo Park, the celebrated traveller, when wandering amidst the burning sands of an African waste, just at the moment when his heart was failing and his flesh had fainted, and he had no hope of restoration or of seeing civilization again, noticed amidst the burning sands a solitary flower that peeped out fresh and beautiful as if it had been just transplanted from the dwelling-place of God. The traveller no sooner saw it than he said, If there be this flower in the desert, a God must have nursed it; his dews must have refreshed it, his sweet sunshine must have warmed it; and from seeing that solitary flower he took heart, and journeyed on, and reached the confines of civilization.

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In the same manner, in the Church of Rome, when we speak severely of the system we never mean to imply that there are no Christians there—God forbid! Just as that solitary flower in the desert would there show a God amidst the burning sands, so a Fénelon, a Massillon, a Martin Boos, and others, show that God's grace is to be found even in and in spite of the Church of Rome. I fear we forget very often how long grace may consist with and struggle against great error; and how much piety may survive notwithstanding repressing and restricting circumstances around. I would not undervalue truth or praise error; I would not undervalue our own privileges, or praise the position of the Church of Rome; but it may be—whilst I believe and can demonstrate that that system is the apostacy; whilst I believe and can prove that the head of that system is the Antichrist—that poor Pio Nono, old, weak, shivering, and descending rapidly to the grave, may have some ideas of true Christianity; he may in his heart have a little love, in his conscience some light, in his intellect scintillations of the truth; and the victim of grave and painful circumstances, he may—I dare not say more—in spite of all and in the midst of all find access to the kingdom of God.

Now if I pass down to still later ages we shall find other citizens of the same city no less illustrious. There is the great Nonconformist Baxter. His picture of the Saints' Everlasting Rest has been the study of the peasant and the admiration of the scholar. With a pen dipped in the very love of heaven, and radiant with apocalyptic splendour, he has portrayed the beauty and blessedness of that rest that remaineth for the people of God. And after him, who can omit to mention the name of Bunyan, the prisoner of Bedford gaol, the writer of a work that ranks with Homer in genius, with Milton's Paradise Lost in epic grandeur; the study of England's firesides; written in the homeliest and the tersest words, pregnant with the fire of heaven, and burning with celestial and undying light—his Pilgrim's Progress? How beautifully does he describe the close

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of time when he says: "By this time the pilgrims were got over the enchanted ground, and entering into the country of Beulah; whose air was very sweet and pleasant, the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shineth night and day; wherefore this was beyond the valley of the shadow of death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair, neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle." How suggestive is that, how beautiful! neither could they from this happy place so much as see what is now the coldest shadow that lies upon our spirits, the shadow of Doubting Castle. "Here they were within sight of the city they were going to, also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of heaven. Now as they walked in this land they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the city they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the street thereof was paved with gold; so that by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick; Hopeful also had a fit or two of the same disease." Such then was Bunyan, the writer of that epic which shall never be forgotten where the English language is understood.

Another citizen was the celebrated Archbishop Leighton, who fled to one party to avoid the bitterness of the other, and learned that in no party or section of the visible church could that peace be realized which was to be tasted only in the city that cometh down from heaven. After him let me mention Andrew Fuller, the illustrious Baptist, one of the most able and vigorous, though now very much forgotten writers of a former epoch; and Robert Hall, the most exquisite writer of the English tongue that ever lived; for the

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style of Addison, and of Johnson, and even the vigorous style of modern days, is surpassed by the classic beauty, the unrivalled rhythm, the rich thought, the poetic splendour of Robert Hall; charged and enriched, as all he writes is, with the evangelical and vital truths of the Gospel of Christ. Then after him was the illustrious Elliot, the apostle of the Indians, and Oberlin and Felix Neff, the evangelists of the Alps; Wesley, the founder of a body that has done enormous good amidst the lowest strata of city population; and Whitfield, whose eloquence shook the age in which he lived. I might come down to more recent names, such as those of Chalmers and others, who have passed away and entered into rest, and have joined the general company of the first born, the innumerable company of saints, the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and have gone to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect. And to these we would add infants who have passed into heaven, forgiven the martyrdom of the passage; flowers laid upon their breasts as they are committed to the dust, and spared the thorns that would otherwise have penetrated their hearts had they been left amid the living here; infants taken from our cold laps, and dropped into the lap of God, and made happy and blessed for ever; the most favoured, the least forgotten of human kind. And sainted men, whose names are sounded by no trumpet, but whose deeds have been approved of God; and happy ones who have entered into rest, whose works do follow them, citizens of no mean city. What a glorious group will be there! what a bright assemblage will that be! Oh may God grant that we too may be numbered with those saints in glory everlasting!

But however distinguished these citizens may be, they have certain points in common. First, they have washed their robes in the same precious blood; all are clothed with the same perfect righteousness; all have entered into heaven, and are the heirs of the kingdom of God, not because of anything in them, nor

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anything done by them, nor anything deserved by them; but wholly and solely because of Christ's righteousness imputed to them, and received by faith and by faith alone. All of them have been renewed, regenerated, and sanctified by the same Holy and Blessed Spirit; all of them were sinners. What an evidence does the apostle give of this when he says that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven; neither idolaters, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God! But what does he add? "Such were some of you." You see who are admitted into heaven; they were once extortioners, covetous, drunkards, revilers, thieves: "such were some of you." Then why is it otherwise with them now? "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified." And these citizens, in the next place, were not only sinners, but they were great sufferers; they came out of great tribulation, therefore they were in it.

If Paul has reached an entrance to that city; if David is an heir of that kingdom; if these two shall be raised at the sound of the last trump, and shall shine in eternal beauty and unfading splendour as the citizens of that new Jerusalem, that city that hath foundations, why should you be excluded? You have not sinned like David, you have not been guilty of murder like Paul, you have not fallen into open sin like the Magdalene; then I ask, why should you be excluded? Your sin does not exclude you; it is your unwillingness to be saved, and that alone, that excludes you. I repeat what I have often said, that this very hour the gates of heaven are open; all God asks you is to submit to let him save you in his way, and to lay aside your own notions of being saved in your own way; and if you will submit to let him save you, and cast yourselves upon his care, and lay your heart's last throb, and your soul's best hope, and your spirit's only trust upon God the Father's love in Christ, the Son's sacrifice, then the Bible is a lie if you are not saved with an everlasting salvation.

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LECTURE XVII.

THE SHECHINAH.

EACH element in the condition of this city deepens in beauty and glory. That can be no common city to adorn which heaven and earth contribute their beauty and their resources.

"*And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*" —REVELATION xxi. 3.

THE first question we should try to answer here is, what is the tabernacle of God? What construction are we to put upon the prophecy that the tabernacle of God shall be with men? I think the best way to ascertain its meaning is to inquire what the tabernacle was, and in what sense that word was used.

It was created whilst Israel was in the desert; a moveable and transitory tent made of goats' skins and rams' skins, and curtains of goats' hair, with purple ornaments and veils, 100 cubits, or 150 feet long, and 50 cubits, or 75 feet in breadth. This tabernacle was a purely transitory and migratory, not a permanent creation upon earth; it was set up at Gilgal, at Shiloh; it was consecrated by atoning blood, and sanctified by the glory that dwelt between the cherubim descending and settling upon it; around it were pitched the tents of the Levites, who ministered continually within it; and inside of it there was what the apostle enumerates in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where he is speaking of the good things, that is the typical things, that had passed away. He tells us of the sanctuary that God pitched, in Hebrews ix. 2:

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"There was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread, which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly." We have thus an inventory drawn up by the pen of inspiration itself of the contents of the ancient tabernacle pitched in the desert. That tabernacle gave place to the splendid temple of Solomon; its furniture in all its integrity being transferred to that august and magnificent edifice; that again, with the exception of the ark, which was lost, passed into the second temple of Herod, into which came a glory brighter than that which dwelt between the cherubim, namely, Christ, the light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. Now the truth is all these things had a direct evangelical significance; they were not arbitrary pieces of furniture which had no meaning, but were in their way divine hieroglyphics, written over with mysterious characters, which the eye of the uninstructed could not penetrate, but rich in prophetic significance of the glory that was to be revealed to every one whose eye was anointed with what the seer in the Apocalypse calls the eye-salve, or what John in his Epistle calls the unction of the Holy One, which teacheth all things.

We notice among the very first and foremost of the ornaments or the furniture in this institution the ark. The ark was a box with a lid of gold; inside of it were the tables of the law; over the lid of gold were two figures of men, representing angels with outstretched wings, the tips of their wings meeting over the mercy seat, and shining down upon its bright lid with intense glory, dark, in the words of Milton, with excess of light, and sleeping there like a perpetual sunshine, eclipsing the noonday splendour in the daytime, and

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lighting up the holy of holies with its undying lustre throughout the night time. This glory, as it was called, was a descent of a celestial splendour; it was a portion of heaven's own light falling like a sunbeam upon a dark but favoured spot in this dark world of ours; and it was meant to give the Christians of that day an idea of that glory when it shall not be a handful of heaven's sunbeams resting in a tabernacle or a temple, but when it shall irradiate and overflow with its light the whole globe, and shall fill earth's darkest spots with a glory that shall put out the sun, and the moon, and the stars. As the sun now by day puts out the stars, so that glory will then put out the sun. This ark was the symbol, in the first place, of the Saviour. And by trying to show you what this inventory of furniture means, without straining the application of a single article of it, we shall form the best idea of what is meant by the promise that the tabernacle of God shall be with men. It never can be construed that the literal material structure of goats' hair, and rams' skins, and purple and vermilion, shall be reproduced upon this earth; but it does seem truly to indicate that new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven, prepared like a bride adorned for the bridegroom; in that city that lieth four-square, the foundations of which are not the coarse granite and sandstone, but all the precious stones of the earth, when these precious stones shall be found, not in tiny specks in the rings of those that wear them, but in massive rocks, the foundations of a fabric such as the sun never shone on, such as eye hath not certainly seen, nor ear heard, nor man's heart conceived, unless so far as it is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit of God;—whilst I believe in the strict spiritual significance of this tabernacle, yet if you will read at your leisure the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse, I think you will find it difficult to conclude that it is a mere figure of speech. To use architectural language, the specifications are laid down with such minuteness, the measurement, the details, and the structure, that one cannot but believe that something will appear on this earth answer-

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ing to this exquisitely beautiful picture. I must repeat again what I have often said, there is nothing absurd in that. It is just as worthy of God to make a precious stone as it is to make a Christian; it is as worthy of him to show matter in its highest and most brilliant development as it is to show moral nature in its highest and its noblest forms. It is a common, miserable notion among many, a notion that is the root of endless heresies, that there is something in matter that is impure and polluted: so far that is true; but it was the devil that introduced the pollution, it was not God; and if it be true that God comes into our world not the Creator of things that were not, but the Restorer of things that were; not the Maker of another world, but the Reformer and the Regenerator of a world that has gone wrong; why should one hesitate—especially if we cannot explain these predictions according to any other principles—to believe that this earth will be a beautiful spot; that its flowers will be such as this present earth cannot give birth to? for there is no rose without a worm in its bud; there is no petal without an aphis or fly upon it to destroy it; there is no precious stone that has not in it some flaw, or some defect. But then and there will be a world all beauty, all perfection: more splendid than that which perished at Adam's fall will be that grand structure which will be raised at Christ's sure and near return.

To show the significance of the ancient tabernacle, and thus to reach some notion of what will be, I may mention that the ark is constantly represented as the type of our blessed Lord. In other words, when the Jew looked to that ark, he did typically and materially what you and I do spiritually and by faith when we look to Christ. When Daniel prayed, he turned his face, not, as certain architectural ecclesiastics or ecclesiastical architects of modern times say, to the east, but towards the mercy seat. Wherever the temple was, there the Jew turned his eye and his heart when he prayed. Why? Because he prayed then in the name of Jesus, just as you and I do. When we pray now we do not look east,

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or west, or north, or south, which have no virtue, but we look to Christ. Daniel looked to the ark, the mercy seat, and the glory between the cherubim; we look to that which was typified and set forth therein, the Lord Jesus Christ. The notion that a church to be fit for prayers being offered in it, or for those prayers to have any chance of being heard, must be pitched due east and west, is positively to detract from the mediatorial excellency of Christ, and to give that mediatorial virtue to the east and west. The attitude in which you pray is nothing; whether you kneel, or stand, or sit, it is a question of decency, not a question of merit or of efficacy; nor in what language you pray, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, or Gaelic; that is a question merely of usage, of education, or of preference; but that you shall pray looking to the ark, resting on the mercy seat, in the name of Christ, this is essential to constitute Christianity. Hence the Christianity of the ark and the Christianity of Christ differ in form, but they do not differ in essential nature and intrinsic character. Now on the lid of this box, which was called the ark, a totally different Hebrew word from the word applied to Noah's ark, denoting—I need not tell you, because a child knows it—a totally different thing; on the lid of this box, which lid was made of the purest beaten gold, that is, gold that was finest, and purest, and strongest, lay sleeping, like the sweet sunshine in a bright summer day in a glen or in a crevice of the rock, a portion of heaven's own glory, along which upward to the skies the heart of the Israelite might look and see the glory that was one day to be revealed, and down which God could look and hear the cry and see the beating of the hearts of his humble and believing worshippers. This lid was made of pure gold, and the glory slept upon it, and it is to it that the apostle refers in Romans iii. 25, where he says: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation." The Greek word in the 25th verse for "propitiation" might be rendered "Whom God hath set forth to be a mercy seat," that is, to be the golden lid of the ark, with the glory shining

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upon it, for the forgiveness of sins. Hence the name given to the lid was "the mercy seat;" and the idea conveyed by that word was that of atonement, propitiation, sacrifice. If therefore that ark typified—for that is all—Jesus Christ, it typified him in that divine aspect in which is set forth his glory, when the apostle said, "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified;" that is—save the propitiatory, or the mercy seat, or the atonement. Within this box called the ark, under this golden lid, there was first of all the law, or the tables of the law. Is not that thought a very precious and a very instructive one? The law no longer flashing in lightning from Mount Sinai; no longer echoing in thunder-peals amid its cloven rocks; no longer in a voice so awful that even the meek-hearted Moses quaked when he heard it; but muffled, stayed, hushed, beneath the atoning blood, and the golden lid of the mercy seat and the glory, to show to us that the righteousness of the law was fulfilled in Christ, and that we are to look not within the box, nor beneath the lid to the written law, but to the propitiatory or atonement, for pardon for our breach of it; for justification by a righteousness which meets all its demands.

In the next place, saith the apostle, there was in this box, and beneath this lid, a golden vessel containing manna. The meaning of this is explained by the Saviour when he says, "Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and were satisfied." Its derivation is strange. When that little frost-like substance fell from the skies on the desert, which the Jews had to collect in baskets, and which was their miraculous bread, for there was nothing else to live on; on their first sight of it, the Jews were so astonished at this strange bread, so unlike good wheat, that they exclaimed, Manhu, which in Hebrew signifies, "What is it?" and from that question, "What is it?" it came to be called manna; the manna in the desert. A portion of this manna, this "What is it?" was stored up in a golden vessel and placed under the lid in the ark, and beneath the mercy

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seat, to be a symbol of that bread that cometh down from heaven. If you will read the 6th chapter of the Gospel of St. John at your leisure you will there find the contrast: "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Now that bread is Christ, or the word that describes him. "Man doth not live by bread alone;" what an exquisitely suggestive thought is that! bread is taken for earth's choicest and best thing; but there is in man a hunger, in his heart a want, in his nature a craving for satisfaction, which not all the dignity, and riches, and glory of the world can ever satisfy or fill; he must live by living bread, and that bread is the word of Christ. The word of man is scepticism; the word of the priest is superstition; the word of Christ is the highest reason, the greatest truth, the truest nutriment.

Inside this ark, and under the lid of the mercy seat, was Aaron's rod that budded. What was Aaron's rod? A dry, withered, sapless stick, that by Divine power, and for a purpose worthy of God's interposition, burst into blossom; and in that ark (and this is not a piece of tradition, because every Jew could have contradicted it at the time if it had been a lie)—in that ark this sapless stick put forth living buds or blossoms. What was meant by that? It was God teaching his infant church that not only in Christ is the law first hushed, not only in Christ is there living bread for man's soul, but also in Christ there is a life that shall burst into blossoms that shall never fade; there is the sap, the vitality, the vigour, that will endure for ever and for ever.

Then over this mercy seat and over the lid, the golden lid, containing the law, and the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, there were two figures shaped like men. And this is Divine evidence that the angels, as far as they are visible, have always been visible in some human shape, and that the common, supposed to be schoolboy or childish, notion of angels having wings is not so absurd after all as we are

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prone to imagine; at all events this is plain, that these two angels or cherubim stood one at one end of the mercy seat and the other at the other end, with their wings stretched out to be a sort of screen over it, the tip of one wing touching the tip of the other wing, and the two faces of the two angels looking down upon the bright glory that burnt beneath, and that glory throwing its unearthly splendour into their faces, and far and wide throughout the house. This also had its significance and its value. The first time we read of these angels, or cherubim and seraphim, names which are distinctions of office, is when Adam and Eve were expelled from Paradise; we read that the cherubim with flaming swords were placed there to guard the entrance to the tree of life. I believe these cherubim were the commencement of the mercy seat; that the mercy seat was placed at the gates of Paradise; and while it sounds to us like the flaming sword to strike down the criminal who should approach, it was rather mercy and loving-kindness shining there to give heart and hope to the weary exiles as they heard the tramp of their retreating footsteps from that beautiful spot they had forfeited and lost by sin. Peter explains what it is—and this is the perfect explanation of it—after speaking of the Gospel, and speaking of its truths, its love, its light, its peace, he says, in 1 Peter i. 12: "Which things the angels desire to look into." And we have therefore the key to this explanation. The cherubim over the mercy seat were designed to show us that angels, who have nothing at stake in our economy, are intensely interested in it. The Greek words, translated "the angels desire to look into," literally translated are, "with outstretched necks;" as it were stretching their necks to the very utmost, they desire to comprehend the marvels, and the mysteries, and the glorious things that are the product of a Saviour's cross and the hopes of the hearts of all them that believe in him.

Having thus described what it was, let me state in the next place that when the tabernacle was moved

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it was also moved with it, as well as the glory that settled on it. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night stood over it; and that was the signal for the hosts of Israel to rest or follow through the desert. The ark on these occasions was carried by the priests; as it advanced the people advanced; when it stood still they stood still; they followed its leadings, and its leadings alone; and wherever it was there the church in the desert was. The ark amid Israel was the Christian church in its infancy; Christ amid his people is the Christian church in its present condition; and Christ visibly present in the midst of his people, visibly glorified, in the world that will be, will constitute the church in its perfection and its final glory.

When this ark was thus carried we read of its effects. Before it and at its approach the Jordan was cleft in twain. The instant that the feet of the priests that carried the ark touched the flood of the Jordan, its waters stood up as an heap on the one side, and there was no water on the other side, and they marched through dry-shod. The miracle was obvious. We have to accompany us through the swellings of Jordan not this ark, for it has perished for ever. If ever relic deserved to be kept it was this ark; and yet if it had been kept we should have fallen down and worshipped it instead of Him who is its end, its significance, and its glory. When the day comes that we shall have to pass the swellings of Jordan, if we are left to ourselves its deep flood will carry us away, and leave us where the Jordan leaves its waters, in the Dead Sea, that has neither life nor hope. But if we approach that last Jordan not with this ark, but shall I say singing? —no, but feeling, that Psalm, the divinest poem that was ever written: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for the ark is with me, thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they guide me;" as we approach the dark valley of the shadow of death, this glory, this shechinah, will light it up with a splendour of which you have no idea; this

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presence, which is power, will cleave its deep flood in twain; and the Christian shall find that there is no death to him that dies in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We read also that this sacred ark wherever it settled blessed the house and the home of him who entertained it. It was entertained by Obed-edom, and its presence blessed his house. And to show you that it had a significance far diviner than strikes the eye, we read in every instance that the hearts of all Israel clung to this ark; if it disappeared their hopes perished; if it was in the midst of them and the glory on it their hearts were quickened. I think the most touching proof of this is recorded in 1 Samuel iv., where we read of a battle between the Philistines and the children of Israel: "And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent; and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching"—now mark what he is watching for—"for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out. And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled to-day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son? And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines;" now Eli was a patriot, and loved his country, but he said nothing at all. And he continued: "And there hath been also a great slaughter among the people:" Eli was a man, and he felt for the sufferings of mankind, but he was silent at that. And he added: "And thy two sons also, Hophni and Phine-

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has, are dead;" Eli was a parent, and he must have felt that deeply, but he said nothing. And then he added: "And the ark of God is taken." And then what is said? "And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died; for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years." Here you have the patriot, the man, the father, bearing each stroke with heroic fortitude; but when the Christian's hope was smitten he fell from his seat and died. But as if that were not enough, there is a still more touching episode immediately afterwards. "And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered; and when she heard the tidings"—a Christian woman, a patriotic woman, a pious woman—"when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not, for"—what to a Jewish mother's heart was the greatest source of joy that could possibly be communicated to it, for every mother in Israel hoped to be the Virgin Mary, the mother of the Saviour according to the flesh; and when they said to her, comforting her, "Fear not; for thou hast born a son," it is added, in words the very simplicity and silence of which are full of pathos, "But she answered not, neither did she regard it." Then what must have been upon her heart that a mother's joy was not felt, that a mother's greatest hope communicated to her no happiness; what was the cause of it? The answer is given in the next verse: "she named the child Ichabod," literally translated, "the glory is departed from Israel; because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband." Now here we have in these two instances the most touching and expressive picture of the affection that an Israelite had towards the ark of God, and towards that which was the token of his glory.

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Then we are told the tabernacle of God shall be with men; not Aaron's rod, nor the manna, nor the golden lid, nor the cherubim of beaten gold; but that which all these were meant to signify — Christ, his people, the earth restored, all things made new, descending a vision from the skies, all beauty, all splendour, all blessedness; the mine yielding its most precious stones, heaven its brightest glory, man's heart its deepest worship; and the tabernacle of God shall then be actualized, no longer in the transitory shape of a tabernacle, no longer in the perishing shape of Solomon's temple: "I saw no temple therein, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it; and there shall be no night there; and there shall be no need of the sun nor of the moon; for the shechinah, the glory between the cherubim, doth lighten it, and God is the light thereof."

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LECTURE XVIII.

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

THE sons of God are his now. But their life is hid with Christ in God. In the world to come they will be revealed in his glory and seen to be his.

"*They shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*"—REVELATION xxi. 3.

THEY shall be his people; and that God himself, not his substitute, shall be with them; not we with him in this far distant land, but he with us in our own reconsecrated and renovated earth. "God shall be with them, and he shall be their God." We have the root of this grand relationship in the beautiful words: "All things are yours; Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; or life or death; things present or things to come; all are yours;" by a tenure indissoluble—"for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Are we not now the people of God? Unquestionably we are. We are as much justified to-day, if justified at all, as we shall be in eternity. We are as safe to-day, if we be Christians, as when we have passed the bourne from whence no traveller returns. Our safety is contingent upon God, not on the intensity of our faith, the temperature of our love, or the persistence of our course. What then is meant by the prediction that at that day we shall be his people? We shall at that day be *seen* to be so. We are told in Scripture, "Now are we the sons of God;" that is a fact; "but it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, and we shall see him as he is." Again: "The world knoweth us not; our life is hid with Christ in God." There is many a

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true Christian at present misapprehended by the world, and in some instances denounced by it; and there are some who are mere pretentious Christians, applauded by the world for their Christianity, who are strangers to its power altogether. God's children now are like precious stones buried in the earth; just as precious at this moment as when noble eyes prize them and kingly persons wear them; but they are hidden, they are covered, and partially concealed in the earth, and amid the *débris* of the fall. But when at that day they are extracted from the earth, and polished and set, they will not only be seen but shine. Christians now are like precious stones, hidden; as precious in their obscurity as they will be in their promised splendour, but invisible to us in their loveliest traits and in their noblest capabilities. At that day, we are told, the sons of God shall be made manifest; they shall be seen as they are; he will present to himself the church, a glorious church, without spot, or blemish, or wrinkle, or any such thing. All those imperfections that conceal Christianity now shall be withdrawn. There is many a Christian in an underground cellar, but nobody knows that there is a Christian there, and very few that there is a human being there. There is many a Christian concealed by his own prejudices and constitutional peculiarities; for it is not true that when a man becomes a Christian all his physical and intellectual idiosyncracies and defects are dissipated: they are modified, but not annihilated. If we read those characters that are set forth in the New Testament we shall recognize this. Peter's peculiarities crop up to the very end of his life; softened, toned down, by the influence of grace, but manifest still. Wherever you find a Christian you find the old traces; as in the condition of a plant that has been taken from a certain habitat, the soil adheres to its roots, and were it washed away wholly, probably the plant would die. In the world as it now is perfection is in promise, and imperfection is the actual experience. Earth clings to us; our fall is traceable; alloy is mixed with the purest gold. Only in the world as it will be, when

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grace is lost in glory, and faith is merged in full fruition, and hope shall be dissolved in having, will all the remains of earth be left behind, and the precious stones that God has selected for the diadem of Christ the Saviour reflect his beauty in perfection, without flaw or defect, perfect even as Christ himself is perfect. At that day we shall be manifested as his people.

In these words we have the substance of what has been called by divines the covenant of God: "At that day I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" or, as it is expressed more fully in Hebrews viii. 10: "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people; and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The same covenant is expressed in the Apocalypse, and only more fully unfolded in its details in the Epistle to the Hebrews. All in this covenant now and then is promise; nothing is exaction. The old law was, "Thou shalt do this, and thou shalt not do that;" the new law of Christianity is, I will give you life, and grace, and power; and leave you to express the instincts of your heart in whatsoever things are just, and beautiful, and lovely, and of good report. We have the old law in the Decalogue; we have the new law in the 5th chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew; where each part opens with a benediction, passes into a duty, and then flowers into a fragrant and a beautiful promise. In the old law it would have been, "Thou shalt be meek; thou shalt be pure in heart;" but in the new law it begins with a benediction—"Blessed;" then it specifies a character—"the meek;" and then it appends the promised reward—"for they shall inherit the earth." Thus in the new economy duty is not presented in its cold, hard, naked, repulsive aspect;

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but it is set, lest you should shrink from it, between a benediction and a promise; a benediction introducing it, a promise crowning it: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The Ten Commandments are the words of a sovereign Lord commanding; the Beatitudes on the Mount are the words of a loving Father encouraging and cheering. Now, this is just the spirit of Christianity; it is not a religion exacting all, and giving nothing; but it is a religion giving all, and leaving the gift to be the inspiration of the obedient life. In the old covenant to believe was a command, to do was a command, to love was a command; under the new covenant, and in the Christian economy, God loves you, and leaves that love manifested to you to work out its result, and to reproduce itself in love to him. God gives you, and leaves that gift in your heart like a living seed to grow up and to issue in the fruits of whatsoever things are lovely, and generous, and just, and bountiful. The whole system of the Gospel is God giving all, without a condition; and leaving the gift by its action to produce the fruits that the law demands, but that the Christian under the influence of love is sure to bring forth. And hence the pulpit in the present day is not a place for showering down hard, fiery rescripts, "Thou shalt;" it is neither Sinai with its thunders, nor Ebal with its curses, nor Gerizim with its blessings; but the Mount of Beatitudes, on which the Saviour stands, and gives you as a free gift, without condition, without pledge, without exaction, all the happiness that the heart is capable of in the world that now is, all the happiness that the heart can hold in the world that will be. How much owest thou unto me? Go forth and do as the gifts you have received prescribe, and show to the world that love is a motive force ten times mightier than law; and that never is God so obeyed, so served, and his people so helped, as when the inspiring motive is not law—"Thou shalt;" but love—Go and show how much thou owest to thy Lord. Such is the contrast between the two covenants.

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The first feature in this covenant which God proclaims in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse is, "I will put my laws into their mind." Of old the law was written upon stone, and, like the material on which it was written, cold; now the law is sculptured by the finger of love upon the regenerated and loving heart. Then it was the law outside and external, and a voice from the Mount; now the law has become a seed quickening in the heart, a life begun within before it shows itself in living without—a central transformation in the depths of the soul, sending forth its influence from the centre to the circumference, adorning, beautifying and elevating the whole temperature of the soul of man. Man's plan of making people better is by *giving* them something that they have not; God's plan of making people better is by *making* them something that they are not. Man gives to the imperfect creature something that creature has not; God makes the imperfect creature something which that creature is not. The one writes the law upon the outer man; the other writes the law upon the inward heart. Thus love in the heart becomes law in the life; and the light kindled within so shines that men seeing your good works glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The second feature in this covenant—"I will write my laws in their hearts"—proves it is a Divine work. What is a Christian? Not the creation of baptism, not the product of diplomacy, but a Divine creation. "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." In other words, what we all need is not the patching up of our imperfect nature, but the regeneration of it. The great law is not, Except a man get rid of this vice and get rid of that, and put on this habit and put on that, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven; but, "Except a man be born again of the Spirit of God he cannot see the kingdom of heaven." Hence, what makes a Christian is not something done to the outer man, but something wrought in the inner heart; and what we all need in order to make us what we should be is not the reparation of this

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or the correction of that, but the inspiration of grace, the quickening presence and power of the Holy Spirit of God; so that under the action and the instinct of a new and a nobler life we shall enter upon every right way, and be found busy in every good work, and taste the happiness and anticipate the joy of that kingdom that has no bounds, and that bliss which knows no interruption and no end. Are these laws within you? Do you say—I do this, not because I find it written in the outer book, "Thou shalt do it," but because it has become an instinct living and impulsive in my heart? Do you say—I do this, not because I am afraid of God's curse, but because his love constrains me? A Christian is not so much a man with certain corrected habits, or much amended manners, and considerably improved morals—all of which are good in their place—but he is a man acting under a new impulse, feeling the force of divine instincts; doing things not because conscience scourges him if he does not, but because God loved him, and he loves God, and delights in translating into life the love wherewith God has loved him. A single mite put into the treasury as the expression of your love to Christ rings more musical in the ears of heaven than a thousand pounds cast in to get the world's *éclat*, or to be a penance or a propitiation for your dishonesty in the past, or out of some other analogous, low, mean, and mercenary motive. Let me ask you thus to test yourselves. What is your dominating force? What is it that restrains, and constrains, and inspires, and guides? I do not ask what you forbear to do, or what you are impelled to do; I do not ask, have you extracted from your nature this vice, or have you lopped off that withered, and broken, and diseased branch? but do you feel within you, constraining you to new acts, to new sacrifices, to new sympathies, to new deeds, to a new course, love to him that loved you; a love that does not falter in the worst nor weary in the best of times; a love that, like a strong and an inexhaustible mainspring, impels you to do whatsoever things are pure, and just, and lovely, and honest, and of good report; and while

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you do so makes you feel not as if you had done something that gives you a claim upon God, but how little you have done when you have done the noblest and the most beneficent things in comparison of what you owe out of gratitude to him who snatched you as a brand from the burning, and has made you a tree of righteousness in the Paradise of our God? "I will put my laws into their mind," and "I will write them;" that is to say, they shall not be mere transient impulses or soon forgotten, but "I will write them upon the living tablets of the heart. Just as I wrote the Decalogue of old upon the granite, so will I fix my laws in their hearts." Hence a Christian does not only go to his Bible for direction; he looks within also. The rescript in the Bible without is reproduced on the sensitive and susceptible tablet of the heart within; and by an instinct that never fails him he knows what is duty, sacrifice, allegiance, loyalty, obedience, service. "I will put my laws into their mind, and I will write them;" they shall never be effaced. The storms of trouble, the persecutions of the world, the waters of affliction, may wash and make them clearer, but they shall never efface those living inscriptions, more imperishable than written with the diamond on the rock; the inscription within of that which God has written without; and yet more, the instinct that is lodged within that ever whispers and rarely fails: "This is the way, walk ye in it." Such then is the change that God will make, and that happy day will show in the creature he has accepted and made his.

He says also: "I will be to them a God;" or, as it is in another passage, "I will be their God." What is implied in this promise: "I will be their God?" If a man comes to you and says to you: In trouble I will be your friend; what do you understand by that? That everything that his resources can supply will be placed at your service. If a physician comes to you and says: I will be your physician when you are ill; what does he mean? That everything that the physician possesses of skill, of talent, of experience, will be placed at your service. And when God comes to a poor sin-

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ful worm of the dust and says: "I will be your God;" what does He mean? All that omniscience knows in the boundless universe; all that omnipotence can achieve; all that love can prescribe; all that Deity infinite, eternal, unsearchable, can supply, shall be at your service, and for your happiness and comfort for ever and ever. What a glorious truth is this then: "I will be their God!" When I say so I do not mean it as a pretty figure or a fanciful thought; it is a precious, earnest, personal, available reality. It is offered to every individual who reads it. God says: "If you will only let me, I will be your God; I will pardon all your sins, I will heal all your diseases; I will renew your youth like the eagle's; I will satisfy your mouth with good things; I will crown you with loving-kindnesses and with tender mercies." Take all the promises that sparkle in the firmament of Scripture like stars in the sky, and when you have read them all, and weighed them all, and appreciated the riches, and the glory, and the resources of all, just say this: That is what God says he will give to me, and do to me and for me, when he says: "I will be your God." If God is not yours, remember it is not that God is unwilling, but that you will not have him.

Then God says also: "And they shall be to me a people." "Ye," says the apostle in Corinthians, "are Christ's, and Christ is God's." But how does he make us his people? First he buys us. The moment we sinned we sold ourselves to the devil. The serf of Russia is released by death; the slave in South America may purchase his freedom; but the serf and the slave of the Wicked One remains in bondage by links that no human power can dissolve, until God himself takes the matter in hand, snaps the links, and lets the slave become the freeman whom the truth of Christ makes free. He will be to you a God, and he will make you his people. Power may make slaves; superstition may make fanatics; the sword may force allegiance; but God's loving us alone can create responsive love to him. He first of all shows himself to us as

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our God, and then he reveals the response in that we become his people. And what are the marks of his people? There is one grand mark, which embraces all—they love him. What is the law?—what are the Ten Commandments? They are love. What is love? The Decalogue in a monosyllable. What is all heaven? It is love. What is hell? It is hate, or sin. And the way which God pursues to make us love him is to manifest himself to us in brilliant and beautiful apoca lypse as our God, and then to ask us: Are you willing to accept my offer, and to become my children? "And to as many," he tells us, "as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

Another part of this beautiful covenant promise is, as explained by the apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." That day is not yet come. We are told in the Epistle to the Ephesians that God has given teachers, evangelists, pastors, till "we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." That day is not yet come; and therefore there are now teachers in our schools, teachers in our families, teachers in our churches, teachers everywhere. It is the era of ignorance, of imperfection and of sin. But a day comes when all Christendom shall be the school of Christ; when the Great Teacher himself shall supersede the under-teachers that are for a day; when they shall no more one man teach another, saying, This is the knowledge of God; but they shall all be taught directly from the fountain head; and in the beautiful language of the psalmist, as well as of the apostle, they shall all know him, from the least even to the greatest. That time comes nearer every hour; some think it is very near; all of us believe its advent is absolutely certain. This present imperfect economy of lights and shadows, of sunshine and clouds, of griefs and gladness, of igno-

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rance and error, must end; and that grand and glorious day break upon the shores of time when all shadows shall flee away, when all imperfection shall be lost in perfect sunshine, and we shall no more ask the people their pastor, or even the Christian his Bible, what is God's will, but his will shall be instinct, his law shall be inner love; and we shall need no outer revelation, but shall each have a revelation in his heart, the teaching and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. It is here where certain writers of the present day have gone wrong. They say that an outer revelation is needless; that an inner light is sufficient. That will one day be truth; but at present it is a huge error. If the day were come when "they shall no more teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; but all shall know him from the least to the greatest," that sentiment of one of the writers of the Essays and Reviews would be absolute truth. But unhappily he has anticipated the millennium; he has dreamed some night that the millenium is come, and he has risen in the morning and written in his Essay that we need no more to teach every man his neighbour, saying, Know the Lord; for everybody shall now know him, from the least to the greatest. By this time he must have discovered that he is in error; for on all sides thousands know not the Lord; and on all sides, in spite of multiplied teachers, teachers of every gift, and grace, and manner, and resource, there are thousands in every neighbourhood and parish who know little of the Saviour, less of salvation, and nothing of the hopes of glory.

Then he adds: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." What a blessed thought is that! The last breath that we draw, alas! will be laden with sin. The very last beat of the heart before we enter into glory will have imperfection in it. But it is a gracious and a glorious promise that God is the sin-forgiving God; at every hour, and every minute, and every second in life's long day his words are not, I

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have forgiven, and will forgive no more; but, "I, even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own name's sake;" and again: "The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin." And hence the Christian need never fear that the imperfection of the hour that passes will not be forgiven. God forgives ever as we in our weakness and our worthlessness come short of what He requires; and every hour of our life we can fall back upon him as a sin-forgiving God: "And their iniquities will I remember no more." And the whole earth, we are told, shall be filled with his glory.

Such is the world as it will be. Do you not sometimes long for that day? I do not mean, do you long for death? Nobody loves death; we have an instinctive recoil from death. Why? Because death is the shadow of the curse; and if it be only its shadow, still it is its shadow, and belongs to the curse. But then we must long for that day, whether we shall enter it through the valley of the shadow of death, or whether we shall be in that happy group that shall never see death; for it is a fact that we should not lose sight of that one day there will be a whole race of Christian men that will never die. It is not true, as people sometimes quote the text, "It is appointed unto *all* men to die;" it is not, "it is appointed unto *men* to die;" but all men will not die. A day comes, perhaps the young may enter on it, when the heart, instead of standing still and staggering on the weary march of life, shall begin to beat with a nobler pulse; and this mortal in the twinkling of an eye shall put on immortality, and this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility. "We shall not all die," says the apostle, "but we shall be changed." But if we should be called upon to pass through the valley of the shadow of death; or whether we shall be called upon, or rather summoned without dying to enter on the rest that remains for the people of God, how must we long for that day when all imperfection, obscurity, misinterpretation, misconception, shall all be lost, forgotten, cast off for ever; and you and I shall

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appear in light in which there is no shadow, and shall know each other even as God himself knows us! And all who have met together within the house of God, and those who have left seats in the sanctuary below, and taken possession of thrones in the sanctuary above; and them you have committed dust to dust and ashes to ashes; what a glorious meeting will that be when we shall talk together, and you shall tell me, oh how cold you were in preaching that love! how poor were your exhibitions of the greatness, of the goodness of that blessed Saviour! how unworthy were your sermons of all that we now learn of him! and how cold were our hearts, and how poor and few were our services! and yet, whilst we admit all this, through your sermons we learnt the way that has conducted us to the land; and whilst we thank you as the servant for the service you have done, we give the glory, and the honour, and the praise to Him who has manifested himself as our God, and has made us in his infinite grace to be his people on a new earth and a nobler world.

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LECTURE XIX.

THE WORLD THAT WILL HAVE NO SORROW.

BREAKING and broken hearts—weary limbs and weeping eyes—are this life's daily experience. The long sisterhood of sorrow still stretches onward. It will not be always so, for

"*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow.*"—REVELATION xxi. 4.

WE have learned something of the nature of the new heaven and the new earth which are to supersede the heavens and the earth which are now about us. We have also read of the holy city that comes down from heaven, and settles a magnificent vision upon the bosom of this earth, beautiful and adorned as a bride adorned for her husband; in which shall shine a glory that shall never fade, and from which shall rise songs that shall never cease; in which all hearts shall be bounding and no heart shall break for ever. We have also learned the mystery and the meaning of that promise: "The tabernacle of God is with men;" or if it had been written in Hebrew it would have been: The *shechinah* is returned; the bright glory that dwelt between the cherubim, and was to the ancient Jew the apocalypse of Deity; the evidence and the proof that God was there shall return in more than its ancient effulgence, and be such a light that the city shall have "no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God,"—that is, the shechinah,—"the glory of God did lighten it; and"—magnificent thought! that shows how soft, and tempered, and beautiful that light will be —"the Lamb is the light thereof."

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The next predicted feature in the world that will be is a most precious one to weeping eyes, to sorrowful hearts, to suffering mankind. And if there be any in this world ignorant enough to deny that they are sinners, we never find one who will deny that man is a sufferer. A poet has said that "man is born to weep." So far it is true he is born to weep; but he was not originally made to weep. If sin had not touched the heart, and opened the flood-gates of tears, we had not needed the promise to cheer us: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The Greek word translated "wipe away" is most expressive; it is εξαλειψει; literally, he will "wipe out all tears from their eyes." It is an interesting fact that the Hebrew word for the eye is also the Hebrew word for a fountain; as if tears since sin was introduced had become the spontaneous and ceaseless exponents of the existence and the depth of the fountain of sorrow that is within. It is this thought that the eye and the fountain are the same in Hebrew that gives such beauty to the words of Jeremiah, the sorrowful prophet: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears." The original is exquisitely beautiful: Oh that my eye were what it also means—a fountain—"that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." A day comes, according to this promise, when not simply God will dry the tear—time may do that—but when he will render tears impossible; unless it be that tears are sometimes shed from excess of joy; he will extinguish all tears of sorrow; he will make the fountain no more well up from the depths of the heart those bitter waters of which the eye is the channel, and which express faintly what they cannot represent fully, the sorrow that may be felt but cannot be said. He will wipe out the tears from all eyes. There is a beautiful passage in the 7th chapter of the Book of Revelation: "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." It is an exquisitely touching thought that God

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should bow the heavens to wipe away the tear from a poor, sinful, sorrowing man's eye. That only reminds one of another exquisite touch in the Book of Genesis, where it says: "God said to Noah, Get thee into the ark;" and then it is said: "And God shut him in." What a thought, that God's own hand shut the door, and thus secured the safety of his thoughtless, his sinful, and yet his adopted child! So in another passage, exquisitely beautiful, when that day comes, "God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes." What tears have fallen since poor Eve went forth from Paradise, bedewing the rose that she held in her hand with the tears of her eyes! what tears have been shed since that day! Perhaps tears mitigate and dilute the grief they cannot represent. There is a sorrow that can find no tears, the deepest and the most poignant of all; but sorrow, by a law of our nature, does usually find expression in tears. In the world that will be all tears shall cease to fall, because there will be no sting in the heart, no ache in the head, no thorn in the pillow, no feebleness in the limbs. Grief shall give place to joy, and all shall rejoice in God their exceeding joy. But it is one of the peculiar laws of our nature that God has introduced, that while sorrow entered our world by the gap—or rather shall I say, by the breach that sin had made?—it has been sanctified by God to the good, the happiness, the improvement, and the elevation of human hearts. It is the peculiar feature of Christianity, in our present economy, that it does not extinguish by a blow the fruits of the fall, but that it takes these fruits and makes them ministries of good. Sickness is a fruit of sin; but how often do we learn upon a sick-bed lessons that we never would learn from a pulpit! Old age is a fruit of sin; but how often does the strong man bowing, the eyes becoming dim, the ears becoming deaf to the voice of the daughters of music, preach to us the lesson that we can scarcely help listening to, that the body must go the way of all flesh, and the spirit must go the way of all spirits, upward and onward to Him who is its Redeemer and its Lord! So again, sorrow and tears, which were

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introduced by sin, are not extinguished by grace, though they will be in glory; but they are sweetened, and sanctified, and diluted by grace, and made ministries of beneficence and progress to us. Hence the Saviour says: "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" and again: "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him;" and again: "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven." There is not a Christian on his way to heaven who does not sometimes meet with springs of sorrow; who does not sometimes feel the road to be very steep, the flints very sharp, and think his Father's house very far off. There is not one who has on him the mark and the superscription of the Blessed Master who has not drunk at some time, and if he has not yet drunk he will yet have to drink of sorrow's bitter cup; perhaps that he may long for that day when there shall be no more tears, and that, weary with the march of life, and yearning for the rest that remaineth, he may set his heart not amidst treasures that wither up like grass, but amidst those treasures which no moth can corrupt, no thief can steal, no time can waste, and no rust can destroy.

When a Christian suffers, just because a Christian, he feels often more keenly than the men of the world itself. A Christian is not exempted from sorrow: on the contrary, his sensibilities are often the keenest, his nature the most susceptible, just because the Christian will not have recourse to the narcotics to which the world flies to dry its tears and to make it forget the sorrow. But then the Christian has, on the other hand, compensatory elements. Down into the depths of his sorrow descend relieving elements that mingle or abate his tears, and dilute more than half their bitterness; and he knows that sorrows which to the world are opaque, and which it has no means of interpreting, are to him all luminous with lessons, teaching him this—that there is not an accidental tear on a human cheek, that there is not an accidental or fortuitous pang in a human heart; that all is part of a grand and blessed mystery; that all is contributing to his purification, his progress, his hap-

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piness; and that heaven will feel so sweet just because time has been so bitter, and its troubles so many, and its winds so stormy.

"We see but dimly through the mists and vapours
Amid these earthly damps;
What seem to us but sad funereal tapers
May be heaven's distant lamps."

Sorrow is in its measure in a Christian's heart the evidence of a future. Man is the heir of an eternity on which he immediately enters after death, and of a world he takes possession of at the resurrection. Sorrow, poignant as it may be, is one of the marks of the greatness, the dignity—shall I say the future destiny?—of man. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, know what pain is; that is a very vulgar and a very common thing; but they do not know what sorrow is. It is a mark of the greatness of humanity that it can weep; and thus the depth of our sorrow may have in it the depth of the fulness of that hope that maketh not ashamed. Our capacity of sorrow so far suggests to the mind the assurance of its ultimate deliverance. The deep, dark shadow on a human heart, when deepest, broadest, darkest, proves because it is a shadow that there is sunshine somewhere. The very power, therefore, to feel sorrow is a proof of our greatness; and the depth and poignancy of the sorrow that human hearts have felt, which most of us can only fancy, having in God's providence perhaps never fathomed it, is the evidence of something grander within and nobler beyond. There are secret sorrows that gnaw the heart like a worm in the bud—there are griefs, encysted griefs, that language cannot tell; that tears dilute perhaps, but cannot waste and do away with; that like a bullet in a veteran's body cannot be extracted. The scar left by a wound upon the body heals; but a grief left upon the heart through some great sorrow, in consequence of some bitter loss, will never perhaps be effaced until that day when God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes, and the scar on the body and the grief on the heart shall be lost and

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dissolved for ever amidst that fulness of joy which is at God's right hand and those pleasures that are for ever and ever.

Sorrow as a Christian ministry in this world exercises a sweetening and a softening influence on the human heart. Many of the songs of the future will have derived their tone from sorrows that were suffered upon earth. We shall bless God through endless ages for the grief that was so bitter while it lasted, but that has been so blessed in its effects and influences upon our hearts. What the dews do to the roots of flowers tears do for the graces of a Christian heart. It is in the shadow of a great loss, or bitter bereavement, that all the beauty of the earth fades, and all the gilding of life departs, that things seen look so mean and so poor, and that the sun sets behind the hills; but in the darkness of that grief there is revealed what the sun leaves when he sets, the starry sky, that reminds us of the city of God, of the many mansions, of the house that hath foundations, whose builder and whose maker is God. The brightest flowers in heaven have had their roots struck deepest in sorrow. Sorrow in a Christian's heart when it is sanctified never sours; it often saddens, it always solemnises. Therefore, when seized by grace, it becomes a ministry of beneficence; it refines and purifies our nature; and the holiest, and the happiest, and the most exalted in the upper world are those "that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore are before the throne."

Sorrow as a ministry of the Gospel has a transforming effect upon others who go to sympathise with it, and to minister to the sufferer. I do not know which gets greatest good; he that goes to comfort another in sorrow or the suffering person that is himself comforted. It is a beautiful law in the animal world that a wounded animal will draw other animals round it in sympathy, as if to suffer with it. A wound in the body instantly makes all the resources of the system rush to that place to heal it. And wher-

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ever there is a sufferer there are always some sympathisers, who may not be able, in the beautiful language of this passage, to wipe away the tears, but who may be able to say a word that will soothe like music. When under the shadow of a great affliction you feel language is so imperfect and so worthless, and the silent look of sympathy is often the richest and the deepest consolation of all. No man ever left the house of mourning where he went to minister to others, and to mitigate their grief, and to hear the story of their agony, without going away a better, not a sadder, but a more solemnised spirit. And hence, it is a duty—but if I say duty, that is a very cold estimate of it indeed—it is a privilege, it is profit, to weep with them that weep, to rejoice with them that rejoice. It is said by the great Master: "It is more blessed to give than to receive;" and if one may vary the expression, it is yet more blessed to receive by giving. Sorrow not only refines the nature of the sorrowing sufferer, but it does good to others; and lessons that have been preached from a weeping household have lived, and lasted, and transformed, while lessons preached by an eloquent preacher have fallen dead upon the heart, or have been heard as the idle wind that men do not regard.

Sorrow reveals to the sufferer his inward character. It is the best moral assayist. It washes off films from the heart. It is when we lie in the shadow of trouble, or in sorrow, or in suffering of any sort, that we begin to take a look into what is very frequently, and more or less so with all of us, a *terra incognita*—our own hearts. Though the introspective study of the heart is not the way of salvation, yet it is the way of a very wholesome and occasional practical and personal profit on our part. When steeped in sorrow we look within, and see what we are, and discover what we are made of. Then, too, our Christianity is put to the test. The hurricane enables you to estimate the depths to which the roots of the oak have struck; the gale of wind on the ocean helps you to measure the strength and value of the ship that weathers it; and great trouble helps you to ascer-

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tain whether you have any anchorage-ground out of and above this world. The man whose only anchorage for his heart is in this present world will be swept away by the first hurricane or overwhelmed by the first wave; but that Christian, however humble, poor, or mean, whose anchorage-ground is by the Rock of Ages, will ride safe in the midst of the greatest storm, and discover by his triumph over it, when the waves have been laid and the winds have been hushed, that his strength is in the Rock of Ages, that his refuge is in God. Earth's darkest shadow arises from heaven's brightest light. The disappearance of gems on earth is owing to God making up his jewels in heaven.

Sorrow has a purifying effect. The apostle says: "Though no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, yet afterward it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness." David says: "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." The steel derives its temper from the fire; gold derives its elasticity from the hammer; and the Christian gathers many of his best qualities from the furnace in which God's grace places him, and in which he keeps him just as long as may be most expedient for him. You may have read of the story of the refiner of gold and the Christian. The latter beheld the former looking always into the melting-pot in the furnace; he asked the refiner why he did so: he said he was melting gold, and that ever as the mere refuse rose to the surface he skimmed it off and put it aside; and then he said, As soon as I can see my own face reflected in the molten gold, I am then satisfied it has been long enough in the fire. Perhaps God deals in some such way with his choicest and his best ones; he keeps you in suffering just till he sees his own bright features reflected from your poor heart, and as soon as he discovers these, the suffering ceases, the furnace is put out, and the gold is struck into currency on earth or shaped into a diadem for the great Master to wear hereafter.

"The night brings forth the morn;
Of the cloud is the lightning born;

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From darkest earth the brightest roses grow;
Bright sparks from black flints fly,
And from out a leaden sky
Comes the silvery-footed spirit of the snow."

All true sorrow has in it what the Germans call a Heimweh; that is, a home feeling; a longing or yearning, or desire for home. If this world were all sunshine—if your heart were always bounding—if there never was a black shadow on your sky, nor a thorn in your pillow, nor a grief in your heart, nor an ache in your body, nor mists gathering upon your eyes, nor the hair whitening with the light of the approaching eternity to which you are going—you would begin to say, This world is our home. One often feels for those who have all this world's glad things, great things, and bright things, and have few of its trials, its sorrows, and its griefs. But when we are the subjects and the sufferers of varied afflictions that come as waves in succession; when we are constrained to say with David, "All thy billows go over me," we then begin to have this Heimweh, this longing for home, this yearning for the world that will be, this desire for something that will satisfy the deepest thirst of our nature. It is the mark of the frailty of man that he seeks to satisfy his soul with trash; but it is the stamp of his grandeur and his greatness that all that is in the world never can satisfy it. And perhaps those who reach its sunniest heights and are possessed of its choicest blessings, if we knew their hearts as we know our own, like Alexander the Macedonian conqueror, who swept the world in his victorious career, sit down and weep—as he wept because there was no other world to conquer, so they that have gained the world weep because there is not another world to possess and enjoy. Thus the sorrow that is sent now gives us a desire for something better. As the old lamps of earth go out the stars of the sky break forth; and as the gilding of time is worn off, the glory of heaven settles upon the heart and soul of man. The sorrow that deepens within us a longing for heaven is a blessed baptism.

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Sorrow is sweetened and softened by the thought, that when we suffer we are walking specially with Jesus. What was his emphatic name? The name that expressed so much—the Man of Sorrows. And what does the apostle say? "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." We know that in this world the greatest natures, the noblest spirits, are the most sensitive to sorrow. That eternal Sun looked on earth through a mist of tears. And when we think what was the greatness of Him who is God manifest in the flesh; what was the purity of his nature—such a contrast to the impurity of others; that he saw sin with eyes with which God alone can look upon it; we may conceive what was the greatness of his sorrow; and we may sometimes feel that while no sorrow of ours is expiatory, no grief atoning, yet it must be some comfort that we are treading the same wine-press; that we are walking on the same rugged road; that, like him that took a part of old in carrying the cross, we are bearing the cross our Master bare before; and so far we have the evidence in our experience, or rather the evidence in our heart, that we are suffering with him, and that with him we too shall reign and rejoice together. Sorrow, in this present dispensation, is the ally of truth. It best reveals to us, next to the Spirit of God, the meaning of the Bible. Was it not when you had lost some near one or some dear one, or when you were in very great sorrow, that you read the Bible with a zest with which you never read it before; and that when beside the dust, the silent dust, of them that you loved; or when under some great and bitter bereavement, you opened the Gospel of St. John and read these words: "In my Father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you; let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me"—did not the old familiar sound that had fallen upon your ears so often, so hard, suddenly become enriched with a music, and pervaded by a sweetness, and accompanied with an emphasis that made them descend to the very depths of your heart; and prove to you, as you never learned before, that there is

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in that Word of God a majesty, a consolation, a power, a glory, that all lay latent; and that God was there, though never till then did you discover it? It is in the darkness of sorrow, it is in the silence of bereavement, that we learn to see and hear God; and that in the Bible we find God as we never found him before. But sorrow, as I have said, in its origin is evil; only when touched by the Saviour's hand does it become sweetening, sanctifying, improving. A day comes when this sorrow will not be needed; when this discipline will be superseded; because we shall be perfect even as Christ himself is perfect. In the world that will be, Marys and Marthas will no more weep because a brother dies, or join the procession of the lengthening sisterhood of human sufferers. Then there will be no more Rachels weeping for their children because they are not. The wine will no more fail at bridal feasts, and light after light will no more go out in happy homes; marble halls will no more be silent, and hearths will no more grow cold; but broken ties shall be reknit; lost links shall be found; all hearts shall bound, and no heart shall break; for we shall be where there is fulness of joy, and where there are pleasures for ever. What a blessed thought! not that there shall be no more sorrow, for that is the least part of it, but that there shall be no more necessity for the discipline of sorrow; no more pride to be humbled, no more covetousness to be dissolved, no more earthliness to be broken up, no more evil to be extracted from our nature; for we shall then be holy as he is holy, and therefore happy as he is happy. It is a glorious prospect: "There shall be no more sorrow." And what does that imply? That there shall be no more sin. Sin is not part of our world; it is not a perpetuity; it is an intruder; it is an interloper; and it shall be expunged from creation, and extracted from every atom of the whole earth; and then our tears shall be dried up, and sorrow shall disappear from every heart; and there shall be, what some one sings so well:—

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"No sickness there,
No weary wasting of the frame away,
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,
No hidden grief.

"Let us depart,
If home like this await the weary soul:
Look up, thou stricken one, thy wounded heart
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

"With faith our guide,
White-robed and innocent, to tread the way,
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,
And find the haven of eternal day?"

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LECTURE XX.

THE DEATH OF DEATH.

PAIN and death will be annihilated in the world to come. They were not inmates of Eden. They are intruders on earth. They will be exiles in the Paradise that is to be, for

> "*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.*" — REVELATION xxi. 4.

I HAVE already explained the prophecy: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." I showed how actual it must be, because God has said it: "There shall be no more sorrow, nor crying." I will now try to show how equally certain is the prophecy or rather the promise: "There shall be no more pain, nor death." But what I would endeavour first of all to show is, that pain and death in consequence of sin are not only penalties attached to it, but that they have become necessary and expedient, and are so far merciful in a fallen and a sinful world. Of course pain and death were not originally meant to be; and undeniably their introduction into our orb and their action in our economy are the products and the direct results of sin. But while so introduced, we shall find by a careful analysis of their action that both of them have received into them gleams of beneficence and love; and whilst we hear in the words, "In the day thou eatest thou shalt die," the sentence of the Judge, we can hear ringing in it the under-tone of the loving-kindness and the sympathy of a Father also.

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Let me show that pain, the sister of death, introduced with death in consequence of sin, is overruled to be by God's interposing goodness a ministry of beneficence in our existing economy. What is pain? The telegraphic despatch sent to the mind intimating that some part of our physical economy is in peril, and that it is time to pay attention to it. It is the warning voice to take heed, to see if something be not wrong, and to take the steps that lead to its reparation. A gifted writer and hard student said to one of his friends in the language he thought of great joy, and he hoped on the part of his friend it would be met by corresponding congratulation: "I have at last got rid of all my headaches." The answer of his friend was this: "I am sorry for you; you have got rid of the safety-valves—prepare for an explosion;" as much as to say that these headaches were the evidence of too intense application; and if the application or the study continued, and the safety-valves were closed, or the headaches did not give despatches intimating that the application was too intense, he might prepare for destruction, that is death. Children play so boisterously, and roughly, and recklessly—and it is always the sign of health when they do so—that if they were not warned by the sense of pain most children would kill themselves in childhood. But the sense of pain tells them, You must not run so fast, you must not push so hard, you must not wrestle so violently; and thus the pain that sin introduced is turned by God into a warning ministry of beneficence conducive to the safety and the protection of human life. A mote floats on the sunbeam, touches the sensitive eye; instinctively that sense of pain makes the eyelid close without your thinking of it, and the eye is protected from greater injury; and thus what sin introduced is made a ministry of beneficence, or the means of protecting and preserving that life which if no warning was given would be every hour in jeopardy. There is a very precious lesson taught us in connection with pain: those who have never felt the intensest pain—I speak not from experience but from informa-

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tion—have never, it is supposed, experienced the intensest pleasure. Archdeacon Paley, one of the most acute and admirable writers, speaking on this very subject, makes the following sensible and just remark: "Pain is seldom violent and long continued; and its pauses and its intermissions become positive pleasure. It has the power of shedding a satisfaction and ease which I believe few enjoy. A man resting from a fit of gout is for the time in possession of feelings which in undisturbed health he never could enjoy. I am far from being sure that man is not a gainer by suffering a moderate interruption of bodily ease for a couple of hours in the course of every twenty-four." That seems a very hard saying, and yet I suspect there is some truth in it. "Two very common observations," says the Archdeacon, "favour this opinion: one is, that remission of pain calls forth from those who experience it stronger expressions of satisfaction and gratitude towards the author of relief; and the second is, that the spirits of sick men do not sink in proportion to the acuteness of their suffering, but rather appear to be invigorated and sustained not by the pain, but by the high degree of comfort which they derive on the cessation of the pain." Now we see in this God's goodness surviving the fall, and breaking out where it had been wholly forfeited. Thus pain, the offspring of the sin of man, is so tenderly touched and overruled by God that it becomes in one aspect of its ministry a source of positive and peculiar pleasure. But then, a day comes when there will be no more pain because no more peril. Pleasures that never pall; joys that have no satiety; blessings no longer in the bosom of a curse, will be the everlasting enjoyment; there shall be fulness of joy and pleasures that are for evermore. But it is most interesting to notice (and we are apt to overlook these things) that even in the curse there is embosomed a benediction; and that God never smites in his anger without administering corresponding, and softening, and remedial joys in his mercy, sympathy, and love.

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Let us look at the eldest daughter of sin, namely, death. "There shall be no more death." You say, naturally, surely it would be a blessing to us if people did not now die. I am not sure of that. If the millennium were come it would indeed be a blessing, and it will then be a fact, an everlasting fact, for there shall be no more death. But death, the offspring of sin, is in this world, and among a sinful population, a most expedient if not a necessary thing. Suppose, for instance, an avaricious man living for ever, and hoarding for ever; absorbing as a vortex, never giving forth like a fountain; he would become a monster and a calamity on the earth. We have all read of a remarkable will case, where the testator left a will to the effect that his vast estates should be vested in trustees, with directions to accumulate for a hundred years. But what was discovered by financiers? That in a little time it would absorb the whole floating capital of the realm. And the House of Lords not many years ago interfered and violently broke the will, to avoid a monetary and financial catastrophe. Now suppose that this man instead of dying should have lived; suppose he should have lived for hundreds of years; if he had adhered to the purport embodied in his will in the course of a short time he would have absorbed, in the language of the statesmen who discussed the subject, the whole floating capital of the realm. Death was therefore necessary; it broke up the trust, and the monopoly of one became the property of thousands. What does that show? That death is expedient, as long as there are passions in the human heart and sinners in our world. In our existing economy death is the great ally of peace. The grave is a real Peace Society. Suppose Napoleon the First had lived to the present day; the nations would have still lived in awe of him; his very name, as said in that magnificent poem written by a poetess who has recently gone to her rest, Mrs. Barrett Browning: "Crowned and buried, his name shook the old casements of the world." Suppose that this great scourge of the nations still lived, the nations would have been

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kept in a state of ceaseless fever, providing for war, neglecting and overlooking the great demands and necessities of internal progress. But death interposed; the conqueror of Austerlitz became a chained eagle on the desert rock of St. Helena; death finished his ambition and the fears of the world together; and now the certainty of death binds over the nations to keep the peace, and helps to convince them that the penalty of its infraction is their life here and possibly their happiness hereafter. We thus see that death, the offspring and the introduction of sin, in our present world and in our present condition, is expedient. We have a striking historic proof of the justice of what I am now stating in the antediluvian age. When men lived to a thousand years; when, for instance, Adam was able to speak with Methuselah, and Methuselah with Noah, so that these three men could embrace 2000 years, what do we find was the condition of society? "The whole earth was filled with violence," and "the wickedness of man was great upon the earth." And what became necessary? God sent the scourging flood from the heights of the sky and out of the depths of the earth, and swept off the world the guilty and the blaspheming generation; and to show that the length of human life had been found to be a calamity, he shortened man's life to the period of a hundred and twenty years, which it ought still to be, and if man perhaps were as careful as he ought to be might in many cases still be—the normal length of human life—a hundred and twenty years. There is no record of life being shortened since; and the reason that it is shorter may be that man is more reckless, and careless, and thoughtless than he ought to be. Although it is remarkable that as medicine and medical skill and science advance its length advances also, for the insurance offices will tell you that during the last forty years man's life on the whole has lengthened—including of course lives saved that used to be lost—some six or eight years; showing that there is more in one's own management and care than some are disposed to admit. Thus death is expedient in a fallen world. Everlasting

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life in the midst of a world in which sin abounds and frequently dominates would be a calamity to the possessor and probably a curse to the rest of mankind. But death has mercy and love in it, and a blessing about it, in that it ends the oppression of the oppressor and terminates the sufferings of the oppressed. In the beautiful language of Job, language exquisitely poetical, but on that account not the less true: "There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. There the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressor. The small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master." As long then as there is sin in our world, and suffering the consequence of that sin, death comes a beneficent messenger to relieve the slave in the Dismal Swamp from the oppressive master whose chains can no longer bind him, and to introduce the captive in the dungeons of Austria to a freedom that kings cannot give and that tyrants cannot take away. And when we remember that there are inner troubles that make men often feel what perhaps it is sinful to say, with one of old, "I am weary of life," and with the prophet Jonah, "It is better to die than to live," death becomes welcome. Because there are no dungeons, and chains, and oppressors, and oppressions in England, it does not follow that there are no sufferings in it to make it desirable for death to put an end to. There are secret sorrows in the most sensitive hearts; there are bitter griefs that language does not speak; there are troubles whose shadows on the soul no sunshine disperses; disappointed and broken hearts no tears relieve and no time binds up; and suffering and sad ones who would court death like a bride, and desire the day that sets them free from the shackles and the restraints of this mortal life as the brightest and the best that passes over their history. As long as these things exist, so long death has mercy in it, though it be the offspring of sin.

Death teaches another very important lesson that we need in this world of ours, the vanity and the uncertainty of all that is in it. If men—I am speaking of a

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fallen world; the world as it now is—lived for ever on this earth, I believe one would worship money, and another would worship honours, and another would worship health, and another would worship beauty, and another would worship science, and every one would worship something; and universal idolatry or rather atheism would be the general condition and creed of mankind. But now we see that all the brightest things in this world are the most precarious and the fleetest; we learn by experience that the laurels may remain green, but that the poet dies; that the honours may be perpetuated, but that the possessor must go—his body the way of all flesh and his soul the way of all spirits. Princes, prime ministers, millionaires, must die; and the very thought that they must die tends to make them hold their property with a less tenacious grasp, and feel what they would not otherwise feel: "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, and the fashion of the world speedily passeth away." I do not say it teaches this lesson always, because there are hearts that no lessons reach, and that nothing but the almighty love of God himself can melt and subdue; but the general impression of the fading nature of all things, and the general result of the conviction that, if the estate is not taken from the proprietor, the proprietor must be taken from the estate, does deaden our interest in earthly things, and prompt the question, is there anything better, brighter, more satisfying, more enduring, beyond? and lead perhaps to the next and necessary question, what must I do to be saved? Thus there are in death mitigating elements that relieve the intensity of the penalty, and prove that in our present economy of things, and conditioned as the world is, death is a most expedient and necessary intruder. But even in dying itself there are interminglings elements of mercy. It does strike one as most kind in our God and Father, that when he pronounced the curse which we had most justly provoked he included, though then concealed, many interpenetrating and relieving blessings in it; and when he said what man should endure because man had

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sinned, he stayed, in the beautiful language of the prophet, his rough wind in the day of his east wind; and in the midst of judgment he remembered mercy. One of the mitigating and relieving lights in the darkness of the shadow of death is, with the certainty that it will come, the uncertainty when, where, and how it will come. If we knew death to be absolutely certain at a fixed day, all nervous energy would be depressed, and the world would die of sickness, helplessness, despair. Some of you may have read that remarkable experiment made by Frederick William the Third of Prussia. Six persons were condemned to death for murder, and of course they deserved to die; he resolved at the request of his physicians to make an experiment with them; three of them were put into beds in which cholera patients had died, but were not told anything about it; the other three were put into beds perfectly clean, in which cholera patients had never been; but they were told: "You are put in beds in which the victims of cholera have just expired." The result was the three that were put in the tainted beds did not die; the three that were laid in pure, clean beds died. Why? Because they believed death certain, and the depression of the anticipation crushed life at its centre and it sunk. It is a well-known fact that persons have died of fright when death has become to them absolutely certain. When Saul heard he was to be killed in the approaching battle he was paralyzed and struck down to the earth. I remember in the college at which I graduated hearing the story of a sacristan, who was very fond of informing the professors of the misdemeanors of the students, perhaps in the exercise of his duty. The students were exasperated against him, and one day told him that they had doomed him to death. They blindfolded him in the large college hall, after spreading sawdust on the floor, and then informed him that they meant to decapitate him. One of the students drew a wet cloth across his throat, and he died instantly on the spot; the fear of death making death actual. God in his great mercy does not usually give us warning of

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death, nor information when we shall die. Were the mother to be told that the beautiful infant that smiles for the first time on her lap, on a certain day and in a certain hour should be carried like a faded flower to the house appointed for all living, her exertions in keeping up the health of her babe would be paralyzed. Were the bride told that on a certain hour, on a certain day, she would be a widow, her bridal joy would all be blighted, and joyous moments would be barely possible. It is, therefore, a happy element intermingling with a penal sentence, that while death is certain and we must die, the time, the place, and the circumstances are uncertain; and therefore man's energy is not broken, nor his spirits disturbed, nor his labours for himself and for those that are connected with him interfered with and destroyed. There is also one other mitigating element in death; and one loves to contemplate these things, because they show how even in what might have been supposed to be, as it was deserved, unmitigated judgment there break forth redeeming and brilliant lights of mercy and of loving-kindness, as if the Sun of Righteousness had risen on the curse. We all shrink from death; perhaps we do no wrong in this; but I believe that in dying there is not that pain that people sometimes think. Were death in its pure judicial aspect to strike, the agony of dissolution would be terrible as the result itself would be awful; but God mitigates the penalty by deadening the sensibilities of man to the pain; and many a one from a slight headache or a toothache suffers vastly more than man suffers in what is called commonly the agony of death. An illustrative story is told by Dr. Adam Clarke, in a letter to Dr. Lettsom, a physician of his day. It appears that Dr. Adam Clarke was, it might almost be said, drowned; his own words are: "I was once drowned. In being so, first of all I felt no pain whatever; secondly, I did not for a moment lose my consciousness; thirdly, I felt indescribable happiness; and though dead as relates to the total suspension of all my physical functions, yet I felt no pain in dying whatever, but was unspeakably happy; and

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fourthly, I only felt pain when efforts were made to restore me, and I began to breathe again." As if in dying there was no pain, and consciousness was unaffected and unimpaired. May not all these mitigating elements thrown into death, softening its nature, lighting up its aspect, be not only memorials of mercy mingling with the curse, but incipient prophecies and earnests that that curse will one day be utterly removed? Does it not appear from all these considerations as I have said that the Father is felt in the Judge; that mercy sparkles in retribution; and that a few beams from Paradise restored shot into Paradise lost, mitigate the calamity that would otherwise have crushed and overwhelmed?

But when it says here, "There shall be no more death," let us remember that in the case of a Christian it is only after all the body that dies; his new birth is the inauguration of everlasting life; and when he dies it is not he—I might say with the poet—

"It is not he, but death that dies!"

and at all events it is not he, but the clothing, or the body that he lays aside to be folded up in the grave, there to rest till raised incorruptible and glorious at the resurrection morn. Thus in a Christian's case there is no real death; there is only the death of the body. The promise therefore is that even this humiliating law shall be repealed; that death shall be expelled from the grave; that a voice shall ring through marble mausolea, through monuments of brouze, beneath green sods in village churchyards and on battle-fields, and in the depths of the desert sea: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" corruptible put on incorruptible; mortal put on immortality; let death now be swallowed up in everlasting victory.

When death comes to us now, it is a relief to be rid of the passions that infest the body, from the slavery and the tyranny of the senses over all the faculties and the affections of the soul, and to be free of the universe, the enfranchised of heaven, the heirs of God and the

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joint-heirs of Christ Jesus. At that day a glorious change will pass upon this poor body of ours. There is reason to believe that we have scarcely an idea of what matter was from what matter now is. From the loveliest rose that blooms in the garden, and wastes its sweetness on the desert air, down to the humblest weed that grows by the way-side, a great degeneracy has taken place. From the noblest specimen of humanity down to the humblest and the lowest, as in the case of the negro, there is a terrible deterioration. We know not by anything we now see, unless by the glimpse of glory which the Master left behind him when he rose from the Mount of Olives, and the cloud received him out of sight, into what shapes of beauty, into what media of light, into what mirrors of loveliness, all creation will be wrought when God shall make all things new, and Paradise shall be restored and a new world will dawn. The chrysalis worm—the repulsive chrysalis worm—gives no idea of the beautiful butterfly into which it is to be developed. The seed that rots and moulders in the earth gives faint foresight of the fair and fragrant blossom that will bloom upon it in summer. So this frail, sick, dying, shattered body of ours, in which are so many fissures and clefts caused by sin—this body of ours, which is sometimes almost broken to pieces by the convulsive efforts of the spirit to escape from its thraldom, and to taste the freedom wherewith Christ makes his people free, when raised from the dead shall be all beauty, and exquisite proportion; identity discernible in glory; the glorified not concealing likeness but imperfection. Decay and sin shall be left behind, and remembered faces shall come forth from behind the shadow of the grave into everlasting sunshine; and the old, weary, weeping earth shall put on her loveliest apparel, her bridal dress, and the footprints of death shall be abolished, and all tears shall be dried up; and the yearnings after union and reunion shall be satisfied; and for the extinguished passions of hate, and envy, and jealousy, and all uncharitableness, shall be lighted on the altar of humanity love, and joy, and peace, and

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happiness in believing; and tabernacles that shall never be taken down shall enclose a glory that shall never take flight, and all things shall be made new. Friendships annealed in suffering shall be perpetuated in heaven; the love that shed lustre on life's long vista shall be perfected and purified there. Martyrs for truth, who have borne its burden on their souls and its scar upon their hearts; who have toiled for the world's highest interests and died for the world's greatest good; who have swept life's humble way with their garments on their errands of beneficence; whose voices have fallen as consolatory music into the hearts of the widow and the orphan—these, with palms in their hands and crowns on their brows, with nothing on their faces remaining of the trials through which they have passed, except the glory of the victory they have gained, shall mingle with the white-robed group who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and faith shall be lost in sight, and hope shall be merged in having, and pain shall be absorbed in indescribable pleasure, and death shall be extinguished in everlasting life; and there shall be no more tears, nor sorrow, nor pain, nor death, for all former things have passed away, and the world as it is has been transfigured into the world as it will be.

O Lord, number us with these thy saints in glory everlasting, for Christ's sake!

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LECTURE XXI.

ALL THINGS NEW.

THE old and weary and worn-out earth has in reserve a glorious regenesis, a magnificent palingenesia. What it shall be is so sure, that prophecy shapes itself in history.

"*The former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.*"—REVELATION xxi. 4, 5.

I HAVE shown that, assuming this to be a fallen world, and its people to be the victims of sin, pain and death, instead of being intrinsically calamities, are turned into mercies. Whilst pain and death introduced by sin are abnormal in their real character, yet in a world overwhelmed by sin, and amidst a people full of imperfections, these exercise a beneficent as well as retributive power. Pain in the body, the fruit of sin, is a warning of danger and of the inroads of death. Death also has in it mercy. It ends the quarrels, the disputes, the controversies of the world. I showed that the possibility of a miser living for ever would be a calamity to mankind. The death therefore of the individual is often a blessing to society. What a calamity would have been an immortal Napoleon Bonaparte, the scourge of Europe, the terror of the nations! When too we know in this present fallen state what ills and aches, what diseases and disappointments, what broken hearts, what bruised spirits, the wear and tear and conflicts of the world create, we must see that the death which does not extinguish the soul, but frees it from its restraints, is overruled as far as a penal thing can be overruled to be a blessing to believers. Death to a

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Christian is not ceasing to be, it is only ceasing to be seen by us; it is not ceasing to be conscious, it is only ceasing to be able to express and unfold that consciousness to men. As the lightning leaves the cloud, and is free—as the bright scimitar leaps from the scabbard and gleams in the sunshine—so the soul leaps from the disorganised or the clay-cold frame; and absent from the body it is not unconscious, nor asleep; it is present with the Lord. And what is presence with the Lord? "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore."

I proceed to sum up the contents of these beautiful words: "The former things are passed away; and I," says the Saviour, "make all things new." *Former* things; not *first* things, which were in Paradise, but subsequent things, or former things to that—that is, subsequent to that economy, are all passed away. What are some of these? It means no more sorrow, nor death, nor tears, nor crying; sin is swept away like a shadow from the dial of time; all that follows in the train of sin—sickness, disease, death, have been dispersed for ever; the tears of sorrow dried, broken hearts healed, bleeding spirits bound up; beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Error of every shade shall be dissolved. There never has been truth in the world without shadow, nor a pure Gospel preached without a corresponding counterfeit of error; and the more vivid and vital the truth becomes, the darker often the shadow that Satan conjures up and gathers round it. But when the day predicted here dawns on earth, all error shall flee away like a mist before the wind, and we shall no more see through a glass darkly, but face to face. As a necessary consequence of this, all controversies, theological, social, moral, political, shall cease for ever. No one can look at the church of Christ in any one stage of its progress without noticing how complicated and painful are the controversies that vex it. Never has there been a year in the church's history in which there has not appeared some man with an odd crotchet,

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or some minister with a twist in his temperament, or a distortion in his intellect, or a disease in his heart, so that precious truths, the glory of centuries, have been denounced and denied, as if they were the novelties of the day, instead of being the inspiration and the wisdom of God. One day all this will pass away; instead of each looking at truth from his own stand-point all will look at truth from the throne of the Lamb. Then every truth will appear in its own beautiful and perfect proportion. We shall see the truth in its fulness and know even as we are known. There will be no more disputes, and quarrels, and coldness, and suspicions among those that are true Christians. It is sad that such men should suspect, and doubt one another, and speak unkindly, and unjustly and ungenerously of one another. How much more happy would the church be, how much more impressed would the world feel, if every Christian would forbear to say an unkind word about a brother when he cannot say a kind one, or would conceal a brother's defects as much as he can, instead of magnifying the defects and diminishing to the very utmost the excellences that accompany them! How much more of the love of God would be felt and how much more of the peace of the church and of the world would be manifested if, whilst we could say nothing good about the worst, we should say as little evil as we possibly can! What is charity? It believeth all things, it hopeth all things. In those you think the worst, if you knew them as God knows them, you would see latent excellences of which you have no suspicion; and in those that you think the very best, if you were to see them as God's omniscient eye sees them, you would detect shadows deep and dark in proportion to the excellences which are set in the midst of them. What says the apostle? "Charity covereth a multitude of sins." What does that mean? Does it mean charity in me atones for my sins? Not at all; it means charity in me casts its veil over the imperfections and sins of a brother; that is to say, while I see a brother doing what I must condemn, thinking what I

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must oppose, speaking what I must rebuke, I will tell him to his face the truth sharply, and yet affectionately; but I will not go behind his back and say bitter things and bad things about him. In the exercise of the charity of the apostle I will cover and conceal his sins and his defects as much as I can from the rest of mankind. Now were such a feeling universal, what a happy world would ours be, what a happy church would Christ's be! Let us think well of these things; and see if we might not love the poor weeping world more, and thus make it better, instead of rebuking the world so bitterly, and thus making it worse. And if as we must own this state of things is not yet come, let us bless God that it will come, and let us pray for that happy period when former things that are faulty shall all have passed away.

Then says the Saviour in the second clause: "Behold, I make all things new." Christ is the Creator, the Preserver, and the Redeemer. He is also what we are apt to forget, the Restorer of all things. He is not only the Redeemer, having paid the price for all, but he is the Restorer, and will make good the purchase that he himself has paid. What things will be made new? Magnificent result! we shall have new bodies. A great deal of what we blame the best of Christians for may not be owing so much to their hearts being cold or their souls unconverted, as to what the apostle calls the burden of this body in which we groan and are in trouble. Many a depressed Christian should blame his nerves, not his soul. Many a person of exquisitely amiable spirit owes his amiability to a happy constitution in God's goodness, not to a regenerated heart by God's grace. And we should be very slow, therefore, to pronounce upon the worst, unable as we are to discriminate between feelings that have their origin in the heart and influences that may have their birth in a diseased body. If you touch one string of a harp a neighbouring string will vibrate in response to it. Soul and body are like two harp-strings; the one acts and reacts on the other. It is a very humbling thing,

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I know nothing more humbling than this, that what one eats can affect one's spiritual peace, and comfort, and happiness. As long as we are in the body, the apostle tells us, we carry about with us a burden. He says he would not wish to be unclothed upon, that is, separate from the body, but clothed upon; but only clothed upon with that house, that new body from which all death, disease, and decay will be expelled, which will not be a weight, but furnish wings to the soul; which will not be an obstruction, but a ministry of responsive aid; which will never mar the happiness of the inward spirit or darken the splendour of the inward shrine, but be the means of the development, and the expression, and the manifestation of all that grace has made us and of all that glory has introduced us into.

We shall be raised to a new dignity. What are we here? Sons of God, but sons in disguise; the blood royal, but the blood royal in a state of depression. "The world knoweth us not, as it knew him not." The world misconstrues us, as it misconstrued him. But a day comes when we shall be invested with a new, a noble, and a visible dignity; when we shall be manifested, in the language of the apostle, as the sons of God; when we shall see him as he is, and be like him, as we now are not; when ours shall be a crown of righteousness, an inheritance incorruptible, a glory that does not fade, a happiness that does not wane with experience nor waste with years.

Among the new things we shall receive a new name. "I will write upon him," says the Saviour, "my new name." Names once were things; they have now come to be signs, while the substance is often wanting. For instance, the title "lord" meant "a bread-giver;" and the title "lady," "a bread-distributor;" but every lord and lady are not always true to the origin of their title. So there are names retained by us which have no counterpart in our experience, current nevertheless, and marks by which we are distinguished. But a day approaches when names merely local, national, ecclesiastical, and so unreal, shall be dissolved, and the name

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that was heard first at Antioch, Christian, shall be last and alone in the millennium, and Christian and Christ shall be all and in all. The name then shall be the thing, the sign shall be substance; we shall be what we seem and profess ourselves to be.

We shall sing a new song. How often do you read that expression: "Thou hast put a new song in my mouth!" and again we read in the Apocalypse: "And they sing a new song." What is meant by that new song? It is this—the highest music never palls; the masterpieces of painting you can look at over and over again, and never weary looking at them. God's great masterpieces in the garden, the flower, the blossom, one could look upon all the year. Man's creation is very different. If one looks at the most exquisite lace made in Brussels or Valenciennes, worth much, through a microscope it appears the most clumsy, coarse structure it is possible to imagine. But if you look at a bee's wing through a microscope, the highest microscopic power you can bring to bear upon it only reveals its greater beauty. So things that have the highest excellence never pall with years or disappoint on inspection. The new song that will be sung in heaven means that the themes will be so rich, the love that inspires it will be so glowing, the triumphs it commemorates will be so grand, the Saviour as its key-note will be so glorious, that the song sung thousands of years ago, though heard every day, will retain all the freshness with which it would be heard if it had never been sung before. Such is the new song, among the new things, that will be in heaven.

All this will take place in a new city, called the new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven. A new city—the city, says the apostle, of the living God. The character of all cities now is not that of cities of the living God. Athens was the city of Pallas or Minerva, a dead goddess; Rome was the city of Mars, a dead god. This new Jerusalem that cometh down from heaven, refulgent with heaven's glory, and settling like a splendid vision on the bosom of a renovated earth, is the city

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of the living God. Life in its streets, life in its streams, life in its trees, for its fruit is for food, and the leaves of its trees are for the healing of the nations; beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, and glorious as a bride descending from heaven adorned for the bridegroom.

We shall find at that day a new earth. Many people are so enamoured of this earth that they do not wish anything better. Well, I admit that it has a great deal of remaining loveliness in it. There are scenes of exquisite beauty, landscapes of unrivalled loveliness; but then the frosts nip these flowers, the hurricane sweeps away this beauty; earthquakes gulp down great capitals; pestilence decimates the population, and still we find too true the apostle's judgment: "all creation groans and travails in pain, waiting and yearning to be delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God." But this earth will be made new; not another earth—we do not want that, any more than another body. We desire a new body disinfected of its evil, and a new earth purified of all the corruption that sin has superinduced. It has always appeared to me one of the most absurd and undesirable things on which some persons seem to dwell with fondness, that this earth, this round ball on which we now tread, shall be annihilated. Who would wish Olivet, Gethsemane, Calvary, Mount Tabor, Sinai and Mount Sion to be extinguished for ever? Who would wish such grand historic recollections, such holy Peniels, such centres of interest to perish from the world and cease to be? No, they will not cease to be. The Restorer will expel what sin has introduced, and recall all things to their Eden loveliness, beauty, and perfection. We want to see sin removed out of it. Take sin from this earth, which is the fever that racks it, the poison that disturbs it, the unclean spirit that nestles in its heart, and that makes it a place of tombs—instantly every desert would rejoice and every wilderness would blossom as the rose. I confess if you could take away from this world sin with all its progeny—disease, grey hairs, old age, iniquity, corruption, imperfection, death, woe—and

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all the progeny of the fall, I would not wish a better nook of the universe for heaven than this same beautiful, restored, and consecrated world. It is not to be annihilated, it is to be restored; it is not to be destroyed, it is to be purified. It will be the porch of heaven—this broken-off island will be reknit to the great continent of glory, and both shall be one. And I am sure when this sister orb of ours, that has long gone astray, that has long played the prodigal, the sinner, and the fool, shall be replaced in its ancient orbit and restored to the sisterhood of worlds, that other worlds which never fell will say as they never said before, Come, bring forth the ring, and the best shoes, and kill the fatted calf; it is right that we should rejoice, for this our dead sister is again alive, and the family that was broken off is now a happy, and holy, and blessed family for ever and for ever.

There will also be a new heaven. Peter says, "We look for a new heaven and a new earth." What is meant by the word "heaven?" The scriptural use of it as a physical thing is the atmosphere, the air that surrounds us. Heaven as a moral condition is the condition of the soul separate from the body. Well, the new heaven and the new earth that Peter looks for, that Isaiah predicts, will be, first, the purification of the atmosphere we breathe. What is the secret source or vehicle of nine-tenths of the diseases that infect the human frame? The atmosphere. And when that atmosphere is purified of all its taint, disinfected of all its impurity, and consecrated by God's word, how bright will the sun shine through a pure air! how sweet the breath of early morn and dewy eve! how resonant with the sounds and strains of psalmody and song! how glorious will be the whole panorama when no dark mist, no foul miasma, taint that air which was originally so pure, and only subsequently, through our sin, become so corrupt!

When all things are made new we shall have a new companionship. At present the holiest and best of men with whom we hold company reveal to us the closer our intimacy more of their imperfections and

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their weaknesses. How true it is that few characters can bear to be inspected minutely! And the longer that we live and come in contact with each other the more we feel there is for God to pardon in the best and for us to forgive in the very worst. But in that happy state when all things shall be made new we shall converse with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the world's grey fathers. I should like to have the opportunity of asking Adam what he felt when he fled from God on that day when he first felt sin, and what Eve thought when she heard the sound of her retreating steps from Eden, and saw the beautiful rose withering in her hand; and man went out into a world depopulated and dismantled, to water it with the tears of his weeping eyes, and to fertilise it with the sweat of his brow. We shall then see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Paul, and Peter, and John; and the Waldenses, who were faithful amid the faithful few; and Luther, and Ridley, and Latimer, and Knox, and Cranmer, and Chalmers, and Wesley, and Whitfield, and thousands of whom the world was not worthy. What a brilliant society! what a glorious converse! what a delightful intercourse! and in the midst of all Him who is the adoration of all, the trust of all, the key-note of all song, the Alpha and the Omega of all wisdom, the Lamb upon the throne, before whom they cast their crowns in flashing showers, and join in anthems that have no discord and in strains that have no weariness: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and riches, and glory, and power, and dominion for ever and for ever."

We shall have in absolute perfection what we have now imperfectly—new hearts. Regeneration upon earth culminates in perfection in glory. At present the best of Christians sometimes feel worship and sermons to be a weariness. It may be sometimes want of interest in the discourse, but it is perhaps as often weakness and weariness in the hearer. Many a time while the preacher speaks the hearer's thoughts are wandering after something else. One must feel very much for men of business,

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who, weary and exhausted by the toils of the week, come into the sanctuary on Sunday. How hard to keep their thoughts from wandering out of the place of worship! They feel on Sunday all the weariness of exhausted nature. But we shall then have hearts so changed that worship never will be weariness, service will never become bondage, God will never be feared or fled from, but always loved. The cold polar atmosphere that is around our hearts shall be warmed with all the fervour of heaven. No unclean spirit shall touch the heart; no evil thought that we deprecate or deplore shall find hospitality in it; no disturbing power shall affect it, no vacillation shall ever influence it; but with hearts warmed with the love, changed by the power, and purified by the presence of the Prince of Peace, we shall love him as we never loved him before, and seeing him as he is we shall adore and worship him as we ought evermore.

We shall have there what we have in its incipient state upon earth, a new conscience. But conscience in its best estate upon earth is very imperfect indeed. We all know that the accusations of conscience outnumber its excuses. We all know what the feeling of regret is, what the more poignant and terrible feeling of remorse is. Such feelings shall cease to be; the conscience shall be the realm of perfect right; its instincts the echoing oracles that respond to the will and perfectly obey the behests of God himself. The whole conscience always and everywhere will be pure, perfect, holy. There shall be no regret, nor remorse, nor sighing, nor grief, nor sorrow. And there shall be when all things are made new also new intellects. When man fell every faculty that he had fell with him. Man's body has not now the physical perfection it had in Paradise, man's memory has been weakened, man's intellect has been shorn of its mighty power, man's conscience has become diseased, and his heart degenerate and infected with sin. Well, a day will come when the horizon that now limits the excursions of intellect will be vastly enlarged. At present the greatest intellect is the first to acknow-

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ledge that the more it sees the greater is the darkness beyond the horizon which bounds its vision. It was Sir Isaac Newton who said when congratulated upon his most brilliant discoveries: "I am but like a child gathering sea-shells and pebbles on the shore, whilst the great unsounded ocean I have never fathomed lies beyond." So the most gifted intellect in this world, the intellect of him who could unbraid the sunbeam, who could cast his measuring line around the stars, who could weigh them in scales, who could estimate their distances and densities, and calculate their speed—that intellect is no more to be compared with what it will be in that higher, purer, happier, better state when all things are made new, than a child's mind is to be compared with his. Then we shall think what now we only dream of, and we shall speak what now we only think, and we shall do and dare what now we only talk; and we shall see infinite resources of gratification, of joy, of happiness, of delight, in every flower, in every tree, in every star, in every pebble, in every text and promise and verse; for our horizon will be enlarged; all things will be made new. The contrast will be great between this clouded, damp, ungenial world and that bright, that blessed, holy, and beautiful home, which eye has not even seen a glimpse of it, nor ear heard a just expression of its greatness, nor heart conceived the things that God has laid up for them that love him.

Have we received the new nature in this world which is the apprenticeship for those new things that will be enjoyed in that world that is to come? Christianity begins in regeneration upon earth; it culminates in the restoration of all things made new. Faith in this economy looks to an unseen Saviour; love embraces him and holds him fast, and will not let him go; hope takes his promises into its heart, and rides at its anchorage-ground amidst the storms of the world undisturbed. But at that day faith will be lost in actual sight; hope will be merged in perfect having; and then having loved him unseen we shall love him when we see him with

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our whole heart, and strength, and might. Grace in the individual heart ripens into glory in the age to come. Have we now new hearts? Has God the Spirit changed our nature? Are we made new creatures? It has been ascertained by science that the density of the planets so varies that if a person were taken from this earth and placed on the planet Jupiter the greater density is such that his own weight would crush him into atoms; whereas there are other planets where the density is so much less than the density of our earth that we should not be able to stand upon the ground, we should be lifted out of it and above it. That shows that the inhabitant must always be made fit for the place in which he is to dwell. It applies morally as well as physically. They that are the heirs of heaven must be made fit for it. Grace on earth makes us meet for glory beyond it. And the way to reach that grace is, Christ and him crucified. That is the door that opens into glory; that is the pathway, more glorious than Jacob's ladder, that rises from earth's deepest grave to heaven's highest throne. Are we trusting in that name? are we pleading that perfect sacrifice? are we found in him? Can we say, Blessed Saviour, I feel how many are my sins, my imperfections, my weaknesses, my wandering thoughts, my sins of omission and commission; but thou knowest that the little trust I have in thee, and it is little in comparison of what it should be—and the little love that I bear to thee, and it is cold in comparison of what it should be—I would not give up for the whole world; I would meet martyrdom boldly rather than renounce my trust and my hope in thee?

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LECTURE XXII.

THINGS IN REVERSION.

CHRISTIANS in this world may be homeless—bread may fail them and water not be sure—but in the world as it will be there is a glorious reversion. It is preparing for our entrance and enjoyment, far off in summers we shall surely see.

"*For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.*"—ISAIAH lxiv. 4.

"*But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*"—1 CORINTHIANS ii. 9.

THOSE things which we are told the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard, the Spirit of God has revealed to them, in the one passage, that wait on him; in the corresponding passage, that love him. If the Spirit, therefore, has revealed them, they must be in the Spirit's own record, namely, the inspired Scriptures, which are given to us for our learning. Let me therefore try to make you up an inventory, simply and plainly, from the Spirit's own record, of those great things and good things which are held in reversion, prepared, and laid up, for those that, in the one passage, "wait upon him;" for those that, in the other, "love his name." What are some of those things? We read of a kingdom that is to come; a kingdom not yet arrived, else we should praise him for it; but a kingdom that is promised, and therefore we pray for it: "Thy kingdom come." The description of this kingdom given by the Spirit of God

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is: "And the kingdom, and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him." If we be Christians, we are the blood royal in disguise; the world knoweth us not; if we be Christians, we are God's hidden kings, destined one day to be manifested, when he will address us in his own royal accents: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world." The second thing revealed by the Spirit as prepared for God's people is a crown. "Henceforth," says Paul, "there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." We read again in another portion: "Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." We lost in Eden our crown of primal innocence; but we receive in Paradise regained a crown of greater glory and magnificence still. There is not a crown on crowned head that does not rust; there is not a temple that wears a crown that does not ache; there is not a crown on the most beloved and loving sovereign in which there are not thorns, and underneath which there are not cares; but there is laid up for God's people a crown that shall have no thorns, into which the rust shall never eat, beneath which there shall be no throbbing brow; the mark of divinity, the symbol of a kingdom, the fulfilment of a promise: "I will give thee a crown of life." That is the second thing which is prepared for those that love him. There is also prepared, which eye has not seen, which ear has not heard, which heart has not conceived, for them that love him an inheritance. What is the future joy? Not a prize we earn, nor a property we buy, but an inheritance to which we are entitled. A nobleman's son inherits his title, and his dignity, and his estates, not because he is a good son, or an affectionate son, or a clever son, but simply and nakedly because he is a son; it is not his merit, but his relationship. We

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shall be admitted into everlasting joy not because we are good men, nor because we are deserving men, but because we are by grace forgiven men, and by the Spirit of God translated into the adoption of God's dear children, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Here our chief freehold upon earth is a grave; here our heirloom and inheritance is sorrow; there no grave is dug for the dead, no farewells are uttered to the dying; it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fadeth not away; in which we can say, all things are ours; Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are ours, and our inheritance; for we are Christ's, and Christ is God's. The next thing worthy of mention prepared for them that love God is what the apostle tells us: "there remaineth a rest for the people of God." There is no rest here; no one ever yet sat down upon the sunniest spot in which and over which he could long say—Now let me remain here for ever. There is no man on earth, however prosperous he may be, who could say or would venture to say at this moment—Now let the wheel stand still; I wish to remain what I am, nothing less, nothing more, for ever. You will find that as soon as you get to one sunny spot you covet another; and when you get to that other, you look higher, and covet another; and every heart's innermost experience tells its possessor, here we have no continuing city; this is not our rest; but blessed be God, there remaineth a rest for the people of God. There is a home in which shall never be heard the voice of disturbance or of discord; a sweet and beautiful haven into which this world's troubled waters shall not roll; a spot where the heart shall find its true anchorage, and the affections cease their oscillations; and we shall say, what no human being, the most favoured upon earth, can say—I am satisfied. We shall behold his face in righteousness, and we shall be satisfied. The next thing that God has prepared for them that love him is what he calls a better country. Perhaps our own land, with all its faults, is the best in the world. Italy may have sunnier skies and a richer soil; France

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may have a more brilliant people and a brighter air; but in neither country is there what an Englishman has, and what is peculiarly and almost exclusively English—home. In that better rest, that better country that is beyond the grave, there is a home. No pestilence shall flap its wings over it; the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick;" no tears will be shed over the dying, no lamentations will be uttered for the dead; a country in which there is no cloud, nor storm, nor earthquake, nor hurricane, nor plague, nor pestilence, nor famine; a better country, to which Abraham looked, and in which all Abraham's children shall meet, as the true native land of humanity, the true country for which human hearts yearn. There is prepared for us, according to God's own promise, a city, a city that hath foundations, a heavenly city, the heavenly Jerusalem. All the host of all the children of God, from the days of Abraham onward to the days of Paul, looked for what they called a city, the city of the living God. And it is remarkably confirmatory of the literality of the fulfilment of their hope that the brightest picture contained in the Apocalypse is the picture of a city: "And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." And after giving the foundations of the city, and robbing earth of its riches in order to add splendour to the picture, he says: "I saw no temple therein;" why? Because it was all temple; "for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it;" why? Because those dim lights shall be superseded by an intenser brightness; "for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there"—night, the time of misapprehension, of coldness, of

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darkness, of error, of gloom, of mistake—"there shall be no night there. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Now there is nothing absurd in supposing when this earth is restored as a material orb, and is reconsecrated by the touch of its descending Lord—when all things shall be made new, and the Creator of it of old shall come into it again, the Redeemer of it—that this picture is not a poet's vision, but the literal and actual realization of a Christian's hope and expectancy. If we are to be raised in flesh and blood, as we shall be; if we are to remain what we are, men, not angels, who are spirits only; not dumb creatures, which are animals only, but the links of everlasting connection between the world of spirits and the world of matter; that magnificent descent from heaven must settle on the bosom of a reconsecrated globe; and there shall be the chancel of the universe, there the high altar, the Son of God; there the glory shining that dwelt of old between the cherubim; there daily service; on its consecrated floor kneeling a mighty multitude, that no man can number; and ascending from its courts, and from its palaces, and from its floor, a hurricane of praise and thanksgiving: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and riches, and power, and glory." He promised us a city; we are come to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, and an innumerable company of angels.

There is prepared for us a house. What is meant by this? The most exquisite picture in the whole New Testament of the heavenly state is that in the 14th chapter of John: "In my Father's house are many mansions." One of the first astronomers of the age was asked the question, What is the grandest and truest picture of the starry sky? The answer was, The 2nd verse of the 14th chapter of St. John's Gospel: "In my Father's house are many mansions." The contrast presented when our Saviour uttered these words was

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most striking. In that temple built upon the brow of Zion there are many tents, and these will soon all be struck; but in my Father's house, the house that hath foundations, the house not made with hands, there are many, not tents, but mansions—abiding dwelling-places. And the picture of it is still more enhanced when he adds, it is "my Father's house." Under its roof-tree will meet all the brothers and sisters of the vast redeemed family of humankind; around our Father's fireside we shall one day gather; and if ever there was a happy Christmas roof-tree upon earth, it will be as nothing in comparison of the happiness of the bright group that meets beneath the roof of our Father's house, and gathers around that home that shall never be taken down. "Our Father, which art in heaven;" "Father," the fatherhood of God; "*our* Father," the brotherhood of all the family of Christians; "our Father in heaven," the common home to which we shall all one day be gathered. Conceive a home emancipated from its cares; a home denuded of its worst and its bitterest anxieties; a home into which sickness shall never penetrate; from which the dead shall never be carried out to the house appointed for all living—conceive a home where no cares cluster about the roof, where no shadows dim the brightness of the fireside; where there are no quarrels, nor losses, nor griefs, nor fears, nor anxieties; and multiply and magnify it ten thousand times ten thousand, and you will have some dim conception of that house which our Father has prepared for them that are his children, and that love him.

He has prepared for us a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And who would be sorry if this old earth were renewed and these old heavens were made new? Some people seem to shrink from the idea and the expectancy of it. They remind one of the prodigal; he got so satisfied with the husks that the swine did eat that he began to forget that he was made to eat bread in his father's house. Now many persons are so pleased with this present world, and so absorbed in it, and so taken up with it,

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that if you tell them about looking for its restoration—as our Lord calls it—its regeneration, they will laugh at you as a fanatic or as a fool, or a man that does not know the world, and does not understand the value of the world. If this world were our all, atheism would be the instinctive refuge of humanity. No man can persuade me that this world is as a good and a gracious God made it; or that it is so good that it needs neither repair, nor regeneration, nor restoration. It was once the loveliest orb amid the stars of the sky or amid the creations of the universe—mysteriously, why or wherefore I cannot explain, sin was permitted to enter; and sin, like a blot of ink upon the sensitive blotting-sheet, the instant it touched it saturated the whole mass with its deadly poison, and it broke forth into fever, convulsion, paralysis, disease, barrenness, blight, pestilence, plague, famine, and death. Who would be sorry, if we were one day to tread this orb, and to worship and to walk on it, and to breathe its air, sin eliminated from it? The instant that sin is eliminated from this orb, its bleakest deserts will rejoice, and its most barren spots will blossom like the rose. If you could only bind the enemy, as he will be bound, for a thousand years, and cast out of this world—if you could remove sin with its fever, extract its poison, eliminate its pollution—the other stars of the universe, when they see this earth restored, and a happy people on its bosom, will gather round it, and will say, Who could have believed such a change? Why, this our poor lost sister is now found; this our poor dead sister is now made alive; come, let us rejoice, and praise Him who created it by his power and redeemed it by his love; and has made this once barren, polluted, wretched, sinful earth to be the bright jewel on which he has engraven, in letters legible to the universe, the name that is above every name, and from which shall be reflected for ever and ever rays of glory, and honour, and worship to Him who loved it, and washed it in his blood, and hath made it the first and the fairest of all creations.

He has also prepared for us, for each of us, a

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new earth; not another earth; for it is not true that this earth is to be annihilated; this would be giving the devil his greatest glorification. Not one thing that Satan secured in Paradise will be handed over to him, except those that would not be saved. Sin, and sorrow, and suffering, and grief, and wickedness, and hate, and corruption, and plague, shall all be presented to Satan, and he shall have the glory of them all. Whereas honour, and praise, and worship, and greatness, and majesty, and the kingdom, shall all be presented to Christ, and he shall have the glory of it all. There will not be one acre of this globe of which Satan shall be able to say, I made it thus, and I have got the victory; but from every inch, and acre, and spot of it shall ascend praise to Jesus, once its Creator, now its Redeemer, its Land Lord, and its Sea Lord, and its Proprietor for ever and ever. As he has prepared for us a new heaven and a new earth, so he is preparing for each of us a new body suitable to the new earth on which we are to walk, the new air we are to breathe, and the new skies on which we are to look. These bodies of ours once were just as perfect as the earth itself was; but the instant sin entered, that instant the first hair began to turn grey, the first wrinkle gathered on the brow, the first wavering seized the nerves, the first fever chilled the heart, the first remorse took possession of the conscience; and man died, because man had sinned. But when this new heaven and new earth shall be, "this mortal," this very mortal, the apostle says, "shall put on immortality, this corruptible shall put on incorruptibility; it is sown in corruption"— but the same *it*, mark you—"*it* is raised in incorruption; it is sown a material body, it is raised a spiritual body;" not a spirit, but a spiritual body. The resurrection is not the creation of a body suitable to us taken from the mass of humankind, and shaped anew by the plastic and transforming touch of our Redeemer; but that very same body that you laid in the wardrobe of nations, which we call the grave, the soul shall come from heaven when Christ comes, and

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shall stand on that very spot on which you laid down that mortal and put on that same body immortal; no longer the clinging, cold garment of decay, but the beauteous, resplendent robe of immortality—a meet shrine for the great priest who is to live in it as in a glorious chancel, and to worship and serve him for ever. Everything like imperfection, everything like sin, shall be eliminated from the body; but its identity is an essential element in the hope of the resurrection. That footfall that is hushed on your threshold in this world you will hear in sweet music again; that countenance that came to your fireside like sunshine shall be relighted with more than its brightest summer, never to be clouded for ever; those circles that are broken shall be completed; those that have passed into the shadow of the grave shall be brought out of it; and I shall know you, and you shall know me; and each feature, deprived of its imperfection, shall be developed in sharper and more beautiful relief, but identically the same that you recognized as your own familiar friend. A very sweet poet thus sings of that recognition:—

"Shall I go wandering on through empty space,
As on earth, lonely;
Or seek through myriad ranks one face,
And miss that only?
Rather I pray Him who Himself is love,
Out of whose essence
We all do spring, and toward Him tending move
Back to his presence,
That even his brightness may not quite efface
The soul's earth features—
That the dear human likeness each may trace
In glorified creatures."

The last I may mention, not the least important of all, but on which I will not dwell, is that we shall see him as he is. We now see him through a glass darkly. Were Christ to manifest his glory to us now, like Saul we should be struck down by the excessive splendour; but one day, when we shall be like him, we are told we shall see him as he is. And if the masterpieces of

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painting be beautiful, if the gems of poetry be exquisite, what shall be our delight when we shall see him crowned with many crowns, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God! while at his feet ten thousand times ten thousand, an innumerable company of priests and kings, that no man can number, will cast their bright crowns in flashing showers, and shall say: "Unto him that loved us, and made us these kings, and consecrated us these priests, and hath given us this house not made with hands, this better country, this rest that remaineth for the people of God, this inheritance, this kingdom, this crown of glory; unto him be glory, and honour, and praise now and evermore. Amen." Be assured, that all things are hastening to the accomplishment of this blessed hope, this glorious expectancy. If you are now among the people of God, every step that you take is a step upward and onward; everything that befalls you is helping you there. Do you know your full privilege, that all things, griefs and gladness, tears and smiles, sunshine and shadow—the disappointment that frets, the reproach that clouds, the loss that pains—all things, under a mysterious touch, are working together, co-operating for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose? There is not an atom of wrath in the heaviest billow that breaks upon your heart; there is not a drop of condemnation in the bitterest cup that is placed to your lips; there is not a breath of penal evil in the severest hurricane that strikes you; there is no condemnation to you. God has infused into the universe itself friendship for and co-operation with that man who is the friend of Christ, a son of God, an heir of heaven. If all these things be prepared for you, is it not a great thing to think of them? People sometimes say, why preach what is future, and merge (which I do not) the obligations and the duties that are instant in the present? I answer, when I wish to get my faith strengthened, I look back; when I want to see my duties clear, I look up; when I want to get a little sweet sunshine into this

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dreary, gloomy, wintry world, I draw upon that magnificent future to which all past ages have yielded their tribute, and in whose grandeur all past ages will be glorified and crowned. I am a Christian; there are three graces that I need in my heart: faith that leans, love that obeys, hope that looks forward; and it is as needful that I should have the hope that draws upon the future sunbeams for the present as that I should have the faith that trusts in the cross; and trusting in that justifies me through faith that is in Christ Jesus. If these things be laid up for us, let me remind you, how instant should be our efforts to lead all into an acquaintance with these things, and the way to them, and the knowledge of the truth! Now is the accepted time; now is the convenient season; to-day is the day of salvation. Let us be saints in order to be stewards; let us be Christians in order to be servants; let us seek grace for ourselves, not simply to augment the capital of our own happiness, but in order to diffuse and spread that grace among those that are ignorant of the blessings that Christ has laid up for them that love him. And finally, recollect that these future things are the elements prepared for a people prepared for them. It has been often said, and I have often repeated it, heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Every stone is quickened and fitted for its place; every star is kindled, and placed in its orbit; every creature on earth, the fish in the sea, the bird in the air, the beast upon the earth, is fitted for the sphere in which it is to live, and move, and fulfil its destined functions—so men must be made Christians, old hearts must be made new hearts, old natures must be made new natures, that we may be fitted and prepared for those grand things and good things which Christ has laid up for them that love him. Can you say, O Lord Jesus, I love thee? Can you say from the very heart, I know, Prince of Peace, thine agony and bloody sweat for me; I know, gracious Saviour, thy tears, thy sorrow, thy suffering; thou knowest all things, blessed Lord; thou knowest that I do not love thee as I ought,

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and do not love thee as I would; yet that little love that I have for thee is so dear to me that I have only one regret that it is not intenser; but little as it is, I would not part with it for all the gems, and pearls, and treasures of the world that now is; and I can only hope that when I shall see thee, who hast loved me as thou hast, I shall then love thee as I now desire, and as I ought?

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LECTURE XXIII.

PATCHES OF SUNSHINE.

A HAPPY purpose is power. When it rests on strong foundations it writes itself legibly in sunshine.

"*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.*"—ISAIAH lxi. 10.

IT seems to be the purpose and hope of the child of God in its universal, if of the Israelite in its primary application, to rejoice in God, and to joy in the God of his salvation. A vow to be happy is a vow worth making; the only question it becomes us to solve, and in which we feel the deepest possible interest, is, Is it possible to be happy? and secondly, if it be possible to be happy now or hereafter, is it our duty to be so? I am sure all must be struck in reading the Word of God with exhortations to rejoice: "They shall rejoice all the day long." "Rejoice in the Lord; and again I say," the apostle repeats, "rejoice." "The kingdom of heaven," we are told, "is righteousness;" that is one third; "peace," that is another third; "joy," that is the last third, and the complement of the whole. It is quite plain, then, that if we do not rejoice, if we are not happy, there is something wrong in us, or there is some misapprehension on our part. It is not because there is not a spring from which we may drink copious draughts, nor because there is not a God in whom we may rejoice and our souls be joyful. But some one will ask, do you by this remark mean to say that people can be insensible to the ills, and cala-

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mities, and troubles that flesh and blood are heir to? I do not believe that you can be insensible to griefs, and sorrows, and aches, and ills, that brood like birds of night, and flap their wings over earth's sunniest spots, and that continually. God does not bid us be Stoics; he has made our nerves of flesh and blood, not iron wires; he has made us sensitive to a pin point; and it is not inferred, nor justly inferred, nor is it taught in the Gospel, that we are not to be sensible to all that we see around us, or to all that we feel within us. The Psalmist, for instance, was an eminent Christian, yet he says: "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." Jeremiah, who was a Christian, and a rejoicing Christian, though his name by very thoughtless people is used to denote all that is melancholy, said: "Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." So we read that Nehemiah's countenance was sad at the desolation of the place of his father's sepulchre. And that we must feel, and that it is not sinful to feel, we have a precedent in that short but sublimely expressive text, the evidence of grief expressed as well as felt, "Jesus wept." That text has sanctified the tears of weeping eyes and bound up the hearts that have been broken. But if we are to be sensible to these sorrows or to these ills, what is meant then by rejoicing? I answer, that our grief is because of the sin that we feel, the sorrows that we see, the troubles that are ploughed into that world in which we have a local habitation and a name. We cannot help being sad. But then, compensatory in the midst of this, neutralizing and overflowing this, there is a stream from that river which makes glad the city of our God. We rejoice in what God is; we rejoice in what God has done for us; we rejoice in what God has promised; and the grounds of joy so completely outnumber and so thoroughly outweigh all the springs and elements of grief, that the Christian says, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God."

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Let me try to show why you should be glad. We are all willing enough to be glad, and we are all sorry enough that we cannot be so happy as we would be; and there is no doubt there are a great many things in this gloomy world of ours to make us sad; no one can doubt it; but then I maintain there are a great many more things elsewhere to make us joyful. But if you persist in picking up every sere and withered leaf that has fallen from the tree, and pass by every green one and every bright blossom that God puts in your way, you do wrong. There is something in human nature very odd in this matter, that it will try to gather elements of sadness, grounds of lugubrious lamentation, and refuse those springs of joy, those elements of gladness, that God has strewn everywhere over the area of creation—Providence and the Bible. Let me try to show you that there are some reasons why we should rejoice in God, and joy in the God of our salvation. Take creation. I do not mean to say that the earth is now as it was. I think that man must be very stupid or very unenlightened who believes that the earth is now, at this moment, as God made it. It is no such thing; it is all blotted, and marred, and broken up. One day it will be restored, but that day is not yet come. But take it as it is; we sinned, we forfeited all; and if God had made this earth a desert, swept by a ceaseless north-east wind, and laid it under a sheet of snow, and left us on that earth to make the best of our weary, cold, miserable pilgrimage through it, he would have even then not have let fall upon us all the curse that we had provoked. But let us look at this earth of ours, on which we have forfeited all, and where we have no right to anything. What remains of pristine beauty are there still! how many sweet, sunny spots are in this orb of ours! how many landscapes of surpassing loveliness! A sight of the flowers thrown forth by the earth in June is almost like a glimpse of Paradise. Those beautiful scenes of rock, and hill, and valley, and alp, and glen, have lingering on them, as if reluctant to depart, the unspent rays of

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Paradise, earnests in their way that Paradise will again return. A poet has said—

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

And he that looks upon all the things of beauty that are around us, if he will only open his eyes and let his heart out of the prison in which he keeps and cribs it, will see in this world of ours, with all its defects, a great many lovely, joyous, and joy-creating things. That is one reason why we should rejoice even now. My Father "made them all;" and to rejoice in this is to act as a Christian. I remember saying one day in a lecture that wherever I see a bit of heather it is to my mind suggestive of joyful and happy emotions. A secular and irritable writer was exceedingly shocked at it, that I should derive any joy from a heather blossom. I am not ashamed to say I derive joy from the first cowslip in spring, from the first crocus in March, from the first snowdrop in January, from the first violet in February—these things are to me full of beauty and creative of joy. And why should not I rejoice in what God has made, and in what remains of Paradise? And why should I look with a sepulchral face and a gloomy heart upon things so bright and beautiful as these? "A thing of beauty is still a joy for ever."

I think we ought to rejoice in God because we see and feel so many blessings running through all God's providential government, and out of evil we discover him so often educing good. We look upon things that happen to us absolutely. If you do so, you will say with the patriarch of old, "All these things are against me." So they feel and so you must conclude when you look at them absolutely, in themselves. But if you will look at the worst things that betide you, assuming you are Christians, your bitterest griefs, your sorest bereavements, your heaviest tribulations, in the sunshine of the countenance of God, you discover—"Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an

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eternal weight of glory." "All things work together for good to them that love God, unto them that are the called according to his purpose." That puts a new face upon this world of ours; for I am persuaded that this is God's everlasting truth, that all things work together for good to them that love God. Do I love God? If I am conscious that I do, let the winds beat, and the rains descend, and the storm strike; let our best beloved be consigned to an early grave; let our riches take wings and flee away; let the reproach of them that reproached Christ descend upon us—what is that? Nothing, nothing at all; all these things are working together for good unto them that love God, unto them that are the called according to his purpose. God's hand is in the thick of all this world's troubles. There is not a lie in the universe that shall not be cancelled; there is not a truth in the universe that shall not live. The lines of a rectifying providence, often faint, but never effaced, shall become sharper and clearer when we discover at the close of this economy that instead of all things working against us, all things were working for good to us. In the wildest sweep of events, in the complexities of time, in the complications of Europe, in Italy, in Syria, in Austria, over all the earth, everything is perfectly arranged in God's own eternal calm, where he sits enthroned above the floods, making all contribute to his glory, and out of all educing liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison-doors to the confined, and hastening on the acceptable year of God, and the day of vengeance of our God. Here is a reason for rejoicing in that the very things that human nature deplores and must feel are the very things that God has consecrated to be ambassadors from himself, to be benefactors to his people, and to give glory to his great name. I will give another reason for rejoicing, and that is, redeeming love. We should rejoice in God, we should joy in our God, because of redeeming love. That is the inexhaustible fountain which overflows in streams that make glad the hearts of Christians, and will one day make glad the city

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of our God. After all, all the joys of prosperity, of riches, of rank, of dignity, are but the rain-drops from the eaves and tiles of the houses, that fall into the outer cisterns of the soul—a momentary refreshment—but the joys of the everlasting Gospel are from deep-sunk wells in the very depths of the human heart, springs within us that mount up into everlasting life. The joys of the world are very much like the streams in summer—they are all dried up by the heat and by the absence of rain; but the joys of the Gospel are like those streams I have witnessed amid the Alps, and under the shadow of the everlasting snow. The Arve and rivers from the Alps are all fullest when the other streams are empty, and their beds or channels are dry; because the melted snow, which only melts in summer, makes them full when the sources that supply other streams are exhausted and dried up. So it is with this blessed Gospel of ours; it has springs in it for winter, it has streams for life's saddest and most sorrowful hours, when the joys of this world pall by possession. It is too true that all this world's joys are vastly less in possession than they were in anticipation. It is most true that when we get the things we thought would be luxuries as we looked at them from a distance, it turns out now they are necessities, and we cannot do without them; and they have ceased to be luxuries and have become merely ordinary necessities. This world's joys are poor and mean, even at the best, and they that have most of them often have hearts that yearn, and hunger, and thirst for something better. We feel, all of us feel, that we often spend our money upon that which is not bread, and our labour for that which satisfieth not; but if any man will believe in Christ, he will have in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life. Thus the Christian has joys that the world has not; he has joy in God, he has joy in his providence, joy in his redemption, joy in his Gospel. There is joy in loving him. Do we ever think that hate is misery? It is a very remarkable thing that the indulgence (and it is one of those strong, latent, ineradicable proofs of the

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great truths of the Bible) of the bad passions is misery. You have felt sometimes hatred to a person; you could wish to injure that person from a spirit of revenge; or you envy some person. The very exercise of that feeling is misery to you. Let a man hate enough, and revenge enough, and have vengeance enough, and he will be a devil in this world; so true is it that the indulgence of the vile passions is essentially misery and unhappiness to him that indulges in them; while on the other hand the exercise of the beneficent passions is intrinsically happiness. What is love? Love God; love your brother; love your children; love your wife; love your husband; love all; love everybody; and what is the effect? That you are the happiest being alive. It is a beautiful and a blessed law that love is happiness; that the indulgence of those feelings that God inculcates, and that the Gospel requires, and that the Spirit reconsecrates, is essential and increasing joy. Let me speak a word to some Christian who is very miserable: if you want to be happy, try to love somebody; go to some poor, miserable widow, who has no fire in her grate, and only rags upon her body, and little if any bread upon her table; take an interest in that poor woman, give her a loaf of bread, and clothe her with change of raiment, and you will positively feel in that miserable hovel into which you have entered, and in which you have done these good things, more than compensatory joy—you have kindled in her cold grate a warmth that has risen and entered your once sad heart. I need not quote such instances; I refer to Scripture itself: "It is," says the Saviour, "more blessed"—that is, more happy—"it is more happy to give than to receive." Whenever you want to be made happy begin to give; whenever you want to increase your own happiness to its highest temperature, and to raise it almost to the temperature of heaven, begin to love. You do not know what the fulness of Christianity is unless you find it as much pleasure to give a shilling to a good object as to earn one. Wherever you see sacrifice you see joy. What parts of the earth

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are most beautiful? Not the Sahara desert, producing nothing; it seems the very picture of wretchedness and woe—it is the representative of a miser's heart—but the fields that wave with the golden crops of autumn; the earth that throws up spontaneously her flowers; the rivers that chime even where no ear hears them; and the beauty and the sunshine that spread over the earth where there are no eyes to see them—these spots are the happiest; they seem to rejoice because they are the most fertile of what gives pleasure and furnishes food for men and green grass for the service of cattle. Perhaps heaven itself will consist in loving; certainly the intensest exercise of love, that is, going out of self, will be the intensest realization of heaven. The words in our language that signify the highest happiness all mean going out of that narrow self in which we are cribbed and confined, and which we often make the stand-point from which we look at everything, and going into a larger, broader, deeper element. What is *transport?* To be carried beyond myself. What is *ecstacy?* To stand out of self; meaning that the highest happiness is when we go out of self and take an interest in others. If, therefore, there be any Christians very depressed, unhappy, and cast down on Sunday, on Monday morning, put on your hat and visit schools, day schools, ragged schools, the evening classes, the classes for the poor, the ministries to the naked and the necessitous, and do something for them, and you will be very happy. And if there be any young men who are very hard-worked and who are not very happy, let me ask them to take a part in teaching Sunday schools, and depend upon it they will feel happier. Happiness is to be gathered like the dew of an early summer morning; but people, instead of taking the dews from God's own heavenly fields, are prone to go to those impure, broken cisterns in which the rain has stood and becomes stagnant and unfit for use.

We owe it to God to be happy. The lower creatures all seem to recognize God. What is the first song of the thrush, the first musical whistle of the blackbird?

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It is that creature's happiness overflowing in song to Him that made it. What are the violets of spring but earth praising God? Did you ever read Coleridge's sublime hymn, written in the valley of Chamounix, on the side of the Alps, where he represents all nature lifting up a ceaseless anthem peal to God? If creation even, fallen as it is, praises God, why should we Christians be the only discord? why should we put on crape and ashes when creation tries to put on her bridal robes? Why should we be the only disturbing elements in universal harmony? Have we no reason to rejoice? Are blackbirds happier than Christians? are flowers more beautiful than the robes of righteousness, that are washed and made white? What are we? Forgiven through precious blood, clothed in righteous robes, adopted into the family of God, made heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus. Is not that enough to make us sing with joy unspeakable and full of glory? But we not only owe it to God to be happy, but to others also. There is a vast deal of influence radiating from every human being, which I may call unconscious influence. I have seen a company of happy people met together, every one happy; a stranger has been added to the group; I have noticed instantly there has been a shadow over the whole. The fact is indisputable that a man coming into a bright circle with a gloomy face makes others gloomy; a man giving voice to lugubrious lamentations makes others lugubrious like himself. There is a contagious influence in emotion which every one is conscious of. I have seen some men, thoroughly good men, children of God and heirs of heaven, who have an unhappy knack of always looking very sad—not solemn, but gloomy; and the consequence is, every group they come into, every circle they mix with, catches the contagion of this gloom, and it becomes gloomy too. A cheerful countenance is a cheap way of diffusing happiness. I have seen other Christians whose faces were all sunshine; so sunny that it seemed as if the very doors would open when they approached, and make them

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welcome, and the very groups of children would rejoice as they mingled with them. An unhappy, gloomy face does not really seem a Christian one; and he who has always a good and a joyous word, and a happy thought, and a bright look, especially for children, is a man who at very little expense is acting as a precious missionary in diffusing gladness. Put into a ragged school a person of a gloomy and depressed temperament; as sure as that man comes there the ragged school will go down, and down, and the children will run away for shelter from the impression of his sad looks. But put in that ragged school a man with a sunny face, and a bounding heart, and a joyous spirit, and always taking hold of things by the bright side, and you will find that the children will gather round him, and feel a festival in his very presence. It is human nature. And we owe it, therefore, to others to be as joyous as we can. But we owe it especially to religion itself to rejoice. It is not fair to identify religion with gloom; it is not just to make the grave the type of the visible church; it is not scriptural to represent religion as cloistral, monastic, and sepulchral. The definition of it is, two-thirds emotion; one-third character. Righteousness, that is character; peace, the calm feeling diffused over the heart; and joy, the electric feeling of him that rejoices in God, and joys in the God of his salvation. If you can only pervade the world with the impression, that your religion has not only made you a just and a merciful, but a happy and a joyous man, you have given a large and liberal contribution toward the spread and the circulation of the Gospel. And why should you not rejoice? The ancient prophet even in the very worst of circumstances could rejoice. What did Habakkuk say? "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls"—suppose there should come this very year, to sum it up in one word, a season of dear bread and of heavy income tax—

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let all that come together, and fall upon us together, and we must feel that, and so far be grieved that it is so; but a Christian, in spite of all, emerging into a brighter summer, and sunshine and happiness, can say: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Such is that joy; casting all your care upon Him who careth for you.

But I must in few words call attention to the last part. The prophet Isaiah here, representing the Jewish people ransomed and restored primarily, but representing God's people always—for it is the same Christ that is the light of the one who is the glory of the other—says the ground why he should rejoice is: "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation." We lost the beautiful robes of innocence in Eden the moment that Eve put forth her hand, and ate of that forbidden tree, and brought sin and sorrow into the world; she then felt that her richest beauty faded, and her lovely robes shrivelled and fell off; and she felt morally and spiritually, rather than physically, that she was naked before God. God covered them with skins. That suggests the first idea or evidence of sacrifice. Animal food was not eaten till after the flood; it was not lawful to eat flesh till then; it is quite plain, therefore, that when the fall took place animals were not eaten for food. No doubt the instant there was sin, and as soon as the Gospel was preached—"The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head"—the symbol of sacrifice was introduced; and as in the case of Abel, the firstling of the flock was slain, and the skin of the animal offered in sacrifice was wrapped round Adam and Eve. Christ our sacrifice is slain; that spotless Lamb has been offered for us; and his spotless fleece, his glorious righteousness, is bestowed upon us. We are clothed, then, first of all, he says, with the garments of salvation; the symbols of it, the seals of it, and the titles to it—salvation from sin, from its curse, from its power, from its presence. Oh, the joyful sound, 'tis music to our ears! From that broken sepulchre in the garden of Arimathea rays of salvation have leapt forth that have

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made the hearts of increasing millions sing for joy. From that cross on which the Man of sorrows hung have descended streams that make glad the city of our God; and these garments of salvation no moth can eat, no time can wear, no thief can steal. But not only does he say they are garments of salvation, but in order to complete the idea, and give it you in all its fulness, he says: "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." The garments of salvation are deliverance from sin; the robe of righteousness is a title to happiness. We lost two things in Paradise; we lost our title to heaven, and we incurred a title only to hell. Now in Christ Jesus we are delivered from hell, in garments of salvation; we are entitled to heaven, in robes of perfect righteousness. In other words, this righteousness is unto all that will, and upon all that believe. "He has made him who knew no sin to be made sin for us that we," who have done nothing but sin, "might be made the righteousness of God by him;" by his righteousness being imputed unto us. It is a robe, a garment, that we do not weave, that we cannot buy, that nobody can sell, that we need not wash; it is the raiment white and clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb, which is the righteousness of saints; it is a free gift; it comes to us perfect and complete; it needs no addition, and to attempt to add to it would be to destroy and to defile it. Faith is not something added to our salvation; it is merely the acceptance of that salvation which God has provided.

When you are thus saved from hell, and are thus justified and entitled to heaven, the prophet describes in exquisitely beautiful words what else you receive; he says: "The robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." How beautiful is that! the Saviour is the Bridegroom, his ransomed and redeemed church is the bride. In Revelation we read—and I believe this relates to that epoch—"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself

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ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." These are full of suggestive thoughts; the Saviour selecting us to be his bride, not because of something beautiful on us, nor something attractive in us, but in his own sovereign and unutterable love. When a man selects a woman to be his wife, he does so because there is something beautiful, or attractive, or fascinating to him in her; but when Christ selected the Church to be his bride, he selected her not because she was beautiful, but to make her beautiful; not because she was holy, but to make her holy; not because she was lovely, but to make her lovely. He says himself, describing this very thing: "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, it was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water; and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badger's skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments; and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine head. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil; and thou wast exceedingly beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." And the same beautiful image, so full of thought, occurs in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where Christ says: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and

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cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church:" now this is the marriage supper of the Lamb, this is the bridal festival in glory; "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." He adds: "As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments." This is extremely suggestive. In the original language, in the Hebrew, it is literally: "As a bridegroom decketh himself with a mitre like a priest." What a fine thought, that our priest is not merged in the bridegroom; that Christ, in every relationship in heaven, as Prophet, King, Bridegroom, Husband, retains still running through all the priestly office! Hence John says when he looked into heaven: "I saw a Lamb just as if he had been slain;" he saw also the great High Priest having the golden censer in his hand. So that even in his relationships as King, as Prophet, as Lord, as Bridegroom, he still retains the cohesion and the foundation of all, his priestly, or atoning, or intercessory office.

We have, in the next place, the bride. She also is to deck herself with jewels. I have often said, and I do not see anything irrational or unreasonable in supposing that it should be so, that precious stones are, in the beautiful words of a poet, the scattered wrecks, the disintegrated fragments of Paradise. There are but two material things in this world that are perfectly beautiful; the flowers of summer, and the everlasting flowers that we call diamonds, and amethysts, and gems, and jewels. These are spoken of constantly in Scripture as beautiful. I have heard Christian persons say to me, Is it lawful to wear these things? It is perfectly lawful if you have paid for them, and it is certainly very beautiful to do so. Objectors quote a passage in Peter's Epistle, and ask, Does not Peter condemn such ornaments? Nothing of the sort. He says of women: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden

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man of the heart." That language is comparative. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." It does not mean you are not to work for your daily bread; but that you are to work more for living bread than for daily bread. So in adorning with gems—you are not to pride yourself on, nor to make that your chief charm, your great attraction; your adorning is not to lie chiefly, mainly, far less exclusively in such things; but in the hidden man of the heart—that inner beauty which excels and eclipses all. We read in the Apocalypse that the new Jerusalem has twelve precious stones for its foundation. Is there anything sinful in a diamond? I think it is most beautiful; it seems to my mind like a bit of Paradise—I mean material Paradise—still surviving. And there is nothing in a flower that is unlovely, but the very reverse; and perhaps these things will all be taken and consecrated to adorn the palace of our King. Like a bride adorned with jewels. What is she? She gives up her own name; she gives up her own responsibilities; she takes her husband's name. Our name was Mara, the bitter; but this name becomes in Christ Naomi, the beautiful. She shall be called by a new name, and she will receive it when she joins in the new song. And then this bride we are told he will present to himself a glorious church. Read the 45th Psalm, and you will see a beautiful picture of the presentation of this bride to the Lord Jesus Christ; where he tells us: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall intreat thy favour. The king's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework; the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought, they shall enter into the king's palace. Instead

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of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." What a magnificent scene will that be when the priestly Bridegroom, adorned with a mitre that never fades; having on his breastplate the precious stones, the Urim and the Thummim, shall, in the world that will be, present to himself this bride, now hidden, but then in bridal robes, in coronation garments; when the lightning of her loveliness shall cover the whole earth with its splendour; and a song of joy shall rise around that bridal, the marriage supper of the Lamb, the consummation of a long betrothal, like a rainbow hovering round a fountain, for ever and ever! Creation shall be spoiled of its most precious things to adorn the dwelling-place of our King. Depend upon it the devil is not to have the mastery; the world is not to be his. Christ, Redeemer, King, Creator, shall return to reign.

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LECTURE XXIV.

THE APOCALYPTIC GLORY.

LANGUAGE fails to express the glory of the world as it will be. Imagery, the noblest and most magnificent, sinks under the burden of beauty and grandeur.

> " *The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory,*" *&c.*—ISAIAH xl. 19-21.

PROPHECIES here expand into promises. It is asked perhaps, what distinction is there between these? A promise is a prophecy of a good thing. Prophecy is the prediction of good or evil, or neither good nor evil, as the case may demand; but a promise is the prophecy of what is good. Each promise is the setting of a precious jewel; each good thing the apple of gold fixed and placed in the network of silver. Faith seizes the great doctrinal truths of the Gospel, which come from, and shine with concentric splendour on him in whom all truths are harmony, and resting upon those doctrinal truths, and upon him who is the root of all and the end of all, faith feels and inspires safety, confidence, and peace. But hope, on the other hand, seizes the promise, and feeds on the precious contents of the promise, and is refreshed by its perfume and elevated and enlarged by contemplating its beauty. Hope feeds on promises as bees feed on flowers, is satisfied and becomes strong. In other words, faith looks at what is written respecting the Rock of Ages, and feels at peace; hope lifts its eye, spreads its wing, and stretches its flight into that future of glory and of blessedness, and

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brings back into the present refreshment, peace, and joy. Extinguish faith, and there is no sense of security; extinguish hope, and there is no joy, or peace, or conscious blessedness imported into the present. It is plain we have much to do with the future. Man is made to look behind him; he is made to look above him; and he is made to look before him. He has a past, with all its brilliant historic truths; he has a present, with all its thrilling and momentous responsibilities; he has a future, with its glory and its gloom intermingled. When a Christian looks back he sees the Rock of Ages; when he looks up he sees the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; when he looks forward he sees a crown of glory, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. If this book contained only the history of the past, man would have very little to do with the future; if it contained only the duties of the present, he would have nothing to do with the past or the future; but it contains that past which is full of the most instructive precedents for us; it explains that present which is charged with duties that stretch into everlasting ages; and it takes the veil from that grand future to which all past ages have contributed, and in whose glory all past dispensations shall be perfected and crowned. It therefore teaches man to look into the past, the present, and the future; and from each, guided by the Spirit and taught by wisdom from on high, he may draw lessons of profit, or encouragement, or joy. It is certainly, one would think, most cheering to look away into that beautiful future in which are so many bright and blessed things; to have something like a few sunbeams cast on this present arena of conflict; this world of griefs and woes; this place of farewells to the dying and mournings for the dead; this scene of conflict and of struggle, where sun-streaks and shadows chase each other, if peradventure we may collect what will lighten the darkness and mitigate the gloom of the night that is now far spent. We are therefore intimately related to and deeply concerned with the

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future; and therefore we should look into the future through the telescope that God has fixed on Patmos. If you look through what man gives you, it is a very different result. Man gives us a kaleidoscope, looking through which we see a great many fantastic forms, and shapes, and colours, of no practical worth. God gives you the telescope, and looking through it, you will see the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, an innumerable company of angels, the spirits of just men made perfect; Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. So far from this looking into the future through the divine telescope interfering with the performance of present duties, you will find it will strengthen, and cheer, and encourage you in the discharge of every duty to your kind, to your family, and your God. If you look into the future merely by your own unaided imagination, and borrow troubles from it, thinking of a thousand calamities that may occur to-morrow, you thereby take into the present two days' troubles, while your God only gives you one day's strength to bear them. But if you look into the future—that future which to us is all sunshine—you take into the present not contingent troubles, but real blessings, which instead of weakening sustain and strengthen you in the fulfilment of present duties. We take our duties from precepts; we take our joys from promises and prophecies. When we wish to see what we are to do, we open God's directive law; when we wish to have a little capital of sunshine on which to draw in order to cheer us, we look into God's sure word of prophecy and glorious promises, laden with blessings that never will be exhausted.

This whole passage is of course a prophecy, or if you like, a promise; whether prophecy or promise, it is full of a brilliant and magnificent future: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Whether this is to be universal, and to cover

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all the earth, or to be only local, as some suppose, and the peculiar privilege of Jerusalem, literally so called, it is clear it is a lift to a loftier region; it is the superseding of the imperfections of the present by the perfections of the future; it is the removal of all stain, alloy, imperfection in the heavenly bodies above, in the earth beneath, and the introduction of a state of things, whatever be its meaning, or however impenetrable its application, in which we shall have, in the language of the Apocalypse, no need of the sun, nor of the moon; for the glory of the Lord doth lighten that city; it will be the light and the joy thereof. Nor from this passage have we any reason, as some have imagined, to suppose that the sun and moon will be annihilated. I do not believe that anything which God made will be annihilated; the only thing that will be annihilated is sin, but nothing else. Why should those glorious orbs that break upon our sight of a winter evening, with an apocalypse of beauty and magnificence too rich to be described, be extinguished? Why should that sun, enthroned in the firmament in more than regal glory, be annihilated? Why should the chaste moon, with her silvery beauty, be banished from her beaten path? Why should anything be annihilated that God has made? I can understand that what Satan has introduced should be presented to Satan again, so that he shall have all the credit of it; but what God has made shall be reconsecrated by his touch, and be presented to him an offering of glory and beauty acceptable on his altar for ever. God made all these things at the first—they are his still —Satan has no right to an atom of earth or a star in the sky. In this world he is not a king; he is a wicked and temporary usurper; and when Christ shall return, and all things shall be made new, sun, and moon, and stars will not be annihilated; but, in the language of this text, confirmed by the parallel language of the Apocalypse, the sun and moon shall not be seen, because of the intenser splendour of a glory that breaks upon the earth like the tides of an illuminated ocean—engulfing in its splendour all lesser glories. Why are

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the stars invisible at mid-day? Not because they have ceased to shine, but because they are lost in the intenser splendour of the risen sun. Why are the little pools upon the sea-sand invisible when the tide has risen? Not because their little channels or beds are not full, but because they are overflown by the advancing tide. So when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, when the Sun of righteousness shall have risen with healing under his wings, the sun will not be annihilated, but paled by the richer lustre, nor will the moon cease to be, but to be seen in the blaze of a greater light. They are both necessary to the march of our earth, and to the balance of the orbs of the sky; but they will be so eclipsed and so lost in the excessive riches of that ever-rising tide of light that we shall, in the words of John, "have no need of the sun, nor of the moon; for the Lord is the light, and the Lamb is the glory thereof." That there may be such a glory or such a light is perfectly feasible. In the ancient temple of Jerusalem, and in the holy of holies, there shone what was called the *shechinah*, that was the visible symbol of a present and propitious God; and that *shechinah*, kindled from heaven, lighted up the whole holy of holies with a glory that no eye but the high priest's could endure. When Saul was travelling to Damascus, such was the glory of the *shechinah*—that is, Christ's visible presence—that he was struck blind, and overwhelmed by the excess of light. And is it not reasonable to conceive that when this age shall be merged into a vastly better and brighter, when this unripe world shall have ripened on the tree of life, there will then come from heaven a glory so real, a splendour so bright, that as the stars and the moon are lost at mid-day and are invisible to us, the sun, and the moon, and the stars will be lost and invisible in the rays of a presence that shall never more be withdrawn? Hence he says: "Thy sun shall no more go down;" there will be no western declension—no gathering shades of evening—no pall or canopy of night; no eclipse to interrupt for a moment the brilliancy of that sunrise which shall break first upon the

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plains of Palestine, and radiate till it cover the wide world with its glory, as the channels of the ocean are covered with the waters of the great deep. "This light shall be an everlasting light;" not a transient gleam as on Mount Tabor; not a local and temporary splendour as in the chancel of the ancient temple; but "it shall be unto thee an everlasting light"—the light that lightens the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel, shall be everlasting.

One can well understand, though not fully comprehend, the clearness that will settle upon all things when that light shall dawn upon this world. Let us suppose that we are spared to see this light, this everlasting light—this light brighter than the brightest meridian sunshine. Suppose we try to look at creation in it; secondly, providence; thirdly, redemption—what a satisfying sight will each yield to us! Creation, reconsecrated and restored, will lie in its splendour like a diamond sparkling in the brilliant and the unclouded sunshine. Then we shall see it in a light in which we never gazed on it before; its dews sparkling like gems, its flowers amaranthine in their tints; their fragrance such as we have never yet inhaled; and throughout all the glory land all scenes beauty, all sounds music; no cold and dreary winter, no clouds to cover up the sky, no mist of tears to rise from the earth; the lion shall lie down with the lamb; every tide of evil shall ebb; every entanglement and perplexity shall be solved and unbraided; earth shall be restored to its Eden blessedness; and on every page of it, the stones, the trees, the flowers, the fields, the sun, the moon, the stars—we shall see fresh stores of beauty unsealed; we shall learn new lessons of light and love, such as never appeared in the history of the past, and in comparison of which the discoveries of geology, astronomy, and science are but the babbling of babes. Let us suppose, in the next place, that we not only see creation in this new light, but providence also. Suppose that we are raised from the dead, these bodies clothed with immortality; suppose that standing in that

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glory land, upon some beautiful Tabor, with all Tabor's splendour, with nothing of its transience, that we are permitted, in the language of Scripture, to look back on all the way by which the Lord has led us—what a marvellous study will each Christian find as he turns over the leaves of memory in its light, and notices on what little things great and blessed issues depended; what accidents, as the world says, were the hinges of results that have turned him by God's grace from being a child of the wicked one into a child of God, an heir of the kingdom of heaven! You will then see, as you look back through the tangled web of providence, that there was a golden thread running through it all; that golden thread the guidance of God. You will then discover, what you cannot discover now, that the accidents of man were the missionaries of God; and that what you thought a random incident, alone, cold, and unfruitful, was really an ambassadress from heaven, sent down to direct you into the paths of righteousness and peace. You will then find as you take a review from that Tabor that I have supposed upon this illuminated, and consecrated, and blessed earth, that in the day when you said, All these things are against me, at that very moment all those things, without exception, were working together for good to you. That loss over which you shed many bitter tears, that catastrophe in your home that almost broke your heart with grief, was no emanation from the wicked one, but an intimation from your Father, detaching your affections from things in grasping which you would have perished, and fixing them upon unseen and glorious things, seizing which you live for ever. What you thought curses were blessings; what you called losses were gains; what you believed to be obstructions were really impulses; and poor blind man—for we have no idea how blind we are when we come to think of what God is—was led by a way that he knew not; and you will be constrained to repeat the 23rd Psalm: My cup runneth over; he hath covered my table, though I did not see his hand, in the very presence of mine enemies; he

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hath made goodness and mercy to follow me all the days of my life; and now I shall dwell in his house for ever and ever. For thousands of years in that blessed future in which I trust we have a foothold, and freehold, and an inheritance, one of the most delightful studies will be the retrospect of the past. When I look at my own past—will the reader say limited past?—my own past narrow horizon and experience, I do not find one single accident in anything that ever happened. Are you not where you are at this moment in consequence of the merest trifle that altered the current of your course through life? Are you not the husband of that wife, or the wife of that husband, in consequence of the most accidental meeting, as the world would call it, upon earth? Are you not at the head of that great mercantile concern, or at present a successful merchant, or a prosperous tradesman, in consequence of the veriest incident that floated like a bubble on life's troubled current; so trivial that at the moment you thought it not worth noticing? Is it not true that the great loss you sustained—the bitter bereavement of which you were the subject—the painful calamity that overtook you—brought you first to grope, and to feel, and to try to ascertain whether there was not some more solid standing than this world can give, some more blessed hope than its great things and its good things can inspire? Do you not trace your deepest and most lasting impressions—impressions that stretch into everlasting glory, to losses, crosses, bereavements, troubles, and trials you deplored at the time, but which you feel you must celebrate as ministering angels of God through the endless ages of eternity? Such will be our retrospect in that light.

Let us try to see how redemption will look in that light. If the book of creation, at present so blotted, then so beautifully rewritten; if the book of providence, which at present we are reading, some with tears, others in sunshine, shall furnish so interesting a text as read from that Tabor, how much more glorious will be the study of redeeming love!—that mystery which we shall

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ever be searching, that memory that will ever be uppermost, that song we shall never be weary of singing, that lesson we shall always delight to study. That there are now great perplexities in the scheme of redemption it would be absurd to deny. Why God permitted sin to come into our world, with all its dislocating and disruptive forces, is a mystery we cannot solve. How it can be true that God has chosen some to everlasting life, and yet that to every human being instant pardon, happiness, and peace, without money and without price, are freely offered in Christ Jesus, I cannot solve; how, notwithstanding God's wish and desire that none should perish, for he has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, yet that thousands of mankind should be left ignorant of the truth, enemies to the Gospel of Christ, is a mystery we cannot now clear up. But what we do not know now, and cannot know, not because these things are dark, but because our minds are so blind—not because these truths are impossible, but because our horizon is so limited—we shall know hereafter. And when we see the Saviour in the midst of us, the marks of the nails in his hands, the traces of the thorny crown about his brow; the memorials of Calvary and the cross enshrined in the glory that is unspeakable; when we shall see him no longer from amidst the vapours of time, through the veil of mortality, and by a glass darkly, but face to face, and as he is, there will not be a Christian there who will not then repeat the very words of Sheba's queen, and say: "We had not been told of half his glory." We shall see then in him all that prophets have proclaimed, all that poets have sung, all that evangelists have told us; but magnified and glorified a thousand-fold. What a study is the human soul! what a marvellous study will be God manifest in the flesh! What a study will be creation, providence, redemption, with all their interlacing and intermingling lights and glories, and links, and lineaments! I can see in heaven not a place where we ceaselessly sing psalms; I can see in the future not a place where we are like monks in their cells, insulated

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solitaires in their niches; but the everlasting home; the beautiful and blessed fireside; our father's roof-tree; the melting of all the families of time into that grand family that fills heaven and earth; whose elder brother is Christ, whose father is God, whose home is infinitude, whose life-time is eternity. What a transporting study will that be! how sweetly shall we speak together of these things! how gladly and joyfully, and with what interest, shall each repeat the story of his marvellous restoration! with what intense delight shall we study those things that sin has darkened, that imperfection now mars, that our blindness conceals from us! with what ecstacy and delight shall we look to that Saviour, as the greatest, truest, most precious benefactor in the universe, who rescued us not from a temporal calamity, but redeemed us by his blood from an inexhaustible and terrible curse! Instead of yearning to remain where we are, sometimes, as one views the splendour of the scene, and catches a view of its reflected beams, one is constrained to wish: "Oh that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest!" Whom have I in heaven, blessed Jesus, but thee? and there is none upon the earth I desire besides thee. My heart and my flesh faint and fail; but thou, Prince of Peace, art the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever and ever!

It is added here: "Thy God shall be thy glory;" that is to say, in that day Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh, shall be our glory. We are too prone in this dispensation to glory in things we ought not to glory in; the wise man in his wisdom, the rich man in his riches. That which is uppermost in each of our hearts to all practical purposes is our glory. It is not said that you are not to love what is beautiful, or to desire what is useful; all that we contend for is, that while these things are to have a place, a subordinate place, Christ crucified and glorified is to have the supreme and dominant place. We do not say that you are not to be thankful if God prosper you; that you are not to be grateful if you have a happy and a peaceful

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fireside; that you are not to be glad when God adds to your means of doing good, and to your store of enjoyment. God has not put us into this world to be monks and nuns; there is no merit in starving one's self, or in persecuting and punishing one's flesh; we are to use the world, not as the monks do, run away from it, but as not abusing it; they that marry, which is lawful, but as if they married not; they that use the world, or possess it, as not abusing it, but recollecting the time is short, and that the fashion of the world speedily passeth away. But we are very prone, with our imperfect nature, to glory in these things, and to make them in our hearts supreme things. So did the man feel when he was invited to Christ's festival: "I have bought oxen"—that was his sole thing: another, "I have bought a farm"—that was his dominant thought: another, "I have married a wife"—that was his supreme object of joy. These things are right; the love of them and the appreciation of them are good. Why should you not love your farm; why not love your warehouse; why not love your trade, your profession, your business, your wife, your children? All this is not only lawful, but dutiful. But then the instant you put these things in the room of a higher object you derange the harmony of the soul; all these must be subordinated to a sublimer passion; and so subordinated that "he that doth not hate mother and father, sister and brother, and wife, and follow me, cannot be my disciple." When we shall see Christ, we shall find in him our glory; with him all the riches of the universe; by him all perfection, and beauty, and joy; from him all the blessings of the footstool, all the dignities of the throne; and finally, to him we shall render glory, and honour, and blessing, and praise; world without end.

And adds the prophet, in words that crown the whole: "The days of thy mourning shall be ended." What a happy finale will that be! There is no cheek that has not sometimes been the channel of a flood of tears; there is no heart, however bounding now, that

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has not sometimes been breaking. There is no bright and sunny face that has not sometimes been clouded by sorrow. There is no home into which death has not penetrated; no household in which there is not one chair empty; no flock in which there is not one dead lamb; there are few families that have not a freehold in a grave upon earth, and a near and dear one who has crossed the great Atlantic of time, and now lives and reigns with God and with the Lamb on the other side. It is a world full of farewells to the dying and of mournings for the dead. But in that blessed world, in that glory-filled land, in that beautiful bay into which all the troubled surf of time shall break, and be stilled for ever, there is no tear shed, no sigh heaved—there will be no sin in the heart to vex it, no cloud upon the conscience to darken it—no pillow for the sick—no sods broken for the dead—no vigils by the dying. In that sweet and everlasting rest there will be no plague, nor pestilence, nor famine, nor death, nor murder, because there is no sin; there will be no suffering and no sorrow for ever. In words grander than those of Isaiah, though kindled from the same everlasting light—words full of music, that sound like a burst of celestial harmony: "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away." "And I saw," says the seer again, in words full of poetry, and not fuller of poetry than of truth, "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there." "The days of thy mourning shall be ended."

What is the ground of all this felicity? The prophet tells us: "Thy people shall be all righteous." That is

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the secret of all—clad in a righteousness which is perfect; inspired by a righteousness which is progressive now, but completed then. What is the future? call it the millennium; call it the rest that remaineth for the people of God; call it the everlasting sabbath or the world that will be—I care not what is the name, if it be a scriptural one—what is it? A prepared place for a prepared people, a holy place for a holy people, a royal place for a royal race. We have no righteousness to entitle us to enter there that is our own; but we are told his righteousness is unto all that will accept it, and it is upon all that will believe in it. If you be righteous in the righteousness of Christ; that is to say, if you are now submitting to be saved in God's way; you have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. You can say to Christ, Blessed Jesus, I know I have forfeited heaven; I know I deserve hell; but oh, my Lord, thou wast wounded for my sins, thou wast bruised for mine iniquities; the chastisement of my peace was upon thee; on thee were laid the iniquities of us all. Blessed Lord, I believe this; I lay my stress of heart, and hope, and prospect of eternal joy upon this. So doing, you have, in the words of the Apocalypse, "washed your robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" so doing—simple as it is; and plain as it was to look at the brass serpent, and be well; or to run under the shelter of the city of refuge, and be protected—you have put on the wedding garment; not woven it, not washed it, not bought it; but you have put it on by Christ offering it to you for that purpose; and if there be truth in the Scriptures, if there be a hope in heaven, the man that thus submits to let Christ save him is justified and will be sanctified; his present condition is, "there is no condemnation;" his future safety is, "nothing shall be able to separate him from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus the Lord."

Do we not feel that dim as our light is, cold as our love is, feeble as our trust is, that bright spot in our hearts which the Sun of righteousness has illuminated,

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and kindled, and keeps burning there, we would not surrender for a world? for it tells us, in Christ alone is our glory, our peace, our hope; and we are not ashamed before the universe boldly and fearlessly to say so. Oh, may we be found at that day redeemed and justified and glorified in that light which has no need of the sun nor of the moon, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the light thereof!

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LECTURE XXV.

THE BRIGHTENING PATHWAY.

As the believer wends his way upward to the glorious rest, he finds his ascent brightening as he rises from the grey morning twilight into the eternal and unclouded noon, for

"*The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*"—PROVERBS iv. 18.

PRIVILEGE in a Christian is always translated into practice. The path that begins at a cross does not deviate, nor swerve, nor disappear till it is lost and merged amidst the splendours of a crown. If Christ be that path beginning at a cross, and Christ all and in all the way that leads to heaven, to happiness, to God, walking in that path we shall find the appropriate illustration of our progress in "the shining light" of the morning, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Who is the just man? There is none that is just, not one. The word "righteous" denotes simply "just." What is justice? Character squared by a perfect and infallible law. If we be not just, can we be made so? All Scripture tells us we have broken God's law—we have swerved from the perfect rule—we have gone astray from the straight, the onward and the upward path—we have ceased to do those things that we ought to do, and therefore we cannot live by them. Therefore the question asked by Job on his eastern plains still may be asked by us: "How shall man be just before God?" Not by deeds of law, for if from this day we could be perfect, what becomes of the past

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period of our life in which we have broken that law in thought, in word, and in deed? But the very idea of perfection upon earth is the most Utopian dream. None are farther from perfection than those who think they are now treading its high and perfect level, and that whoever may be wrong God knows they are all that they should be. Then how are we to be just before God? There are two senses in which we may be described as just men; first, justified by Christ's righteousness, done for us, imputed to us; the alone, the perfect, the indefeasible right to heaven's highest height and to God's holiest and happiest presence; and secondly, we become just men by the work of the Spirit of God within us, removing the heart of stone, scattering the prejudices that cloud our eyesight, breaking the force of the passions that enslave us, and fitting us by an inner character for that glory to which we have become entitled by an outer righteousness received by faith and imputed to us. In a well-known Catechism called the Shorter Catechism, the question is asked: "What is justification?" "Justification is an act"—mark the words—"an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone." What a happy definition is that! how perfect and how conclusive! But when it requires an answer to the question: "What is sanctification?" "Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit." Mark well the distinction; justification is an *act*, it is a forensic act, a sentence pronounced, finished, and done with; so much so that the Christian who is justified to-day is as much justified as he will be through eternity; and the poorest, weakest, most vacillating Christian is as much entitled to heaven as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the apostle Paul, the evangelist John, or any of the apostles. Our right to heaven has no degrees; it is perfect; it is not ours, but Christ's. Our sins were never his when he died for us; his righteousness is never ours when we are justified by it. Our sins imputed to him brought him to that

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agony and bloody sweat; his righteousness imputed to us will lift us to that crown of glory that fadeth not. He was perfectly innocent when he cried in fearful agony, "It is finished;" and you and I when we plant our first footstep on that margin that separates grace from glory, time from eternity, shall at that very moment feel that we are miserable sinners; and the only reason why we shall be there accepted, welcomed by a thousand congratulating voices, will be not that we deserve it, but that Christ Jesus has deserved it for us. But what is sanctification defined to be? Justification is "an act," sanctification is "a work;" it is not a deed done, it is a process. "Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled"—it is progressive—"more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness." In these we have the picture of the just man; our justification so perfect in its nature that omniscience cannot see a flaw in it; our sanctification God knows so imperfect that we are needing our imperfections and our sins not only every day, but every hour and every second, pardoned and purified. Our title to heaven is perfect, and nothing can disturb it; it is not to be shaken even by our weak faith. We often find a Christian whose faith is very weak. He is beset perhaps by physical weakness, by bodily disease, by depressing and disturbing inroads from a thousand sources; his faith does faint, his heart is cast down, and he thinks that now all is wrong with him. It is a blessed thought that when our faith fails Christ's righteousness remains; that our justification is not the tenacity of our faith, the intensity of our love, nor the strength of our convictions, but the finished righteousness of the Son of God, and justified by that righteousness we may have peace with God. Sanctification is the work of God's Spirit. He inlays the heart with purity—he illuminates the understanding with light—he restores to the memory the elastic spring it has lost, and ripens us and fits us for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

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Having seen the subject of this, the just man, let us turn our attention to his history. His history is "like the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The first truth taught in this illustration is that a Christian's path, often zigzag, is still on the whole steadily progressive. We know that when the light begins to break in the grey morning twilight it increases in splendour in the eastern sky until at noontide the whole heaven and earth are filled with its beauty. So it is with the Christian: grace, a germ in his heart, planted there by God, can no more be extinguished than the throne of Deity can be upset. He will not, he says himself, break the bruised reed, he will not quench the smoking flax; and however dim the light that is in your heart now, if it should be the grey, cold, misty morning light of infant day, as sure as it is true day so sure will it increase in splendour and in progress, till it is lost in the glories of high, happy, eternal noon. You never saw a morning break and evening come on before twelve o'clock. As sure as the sun rises, so sure he will sweep through the circle that is assigned him till he set in the west. So a Christian with the least atom of grace in his heart, with the least grey, struggling beam of misty morning light in his soul, will advance slowly or swiftly, but surely to noonday. His path is progressive from grace to glory. A second thought suggested by the illustration, that the Christian's path is like the shining light, is that his progress is beyond the reach of all arrest and must defy all resistance wherever and from whatever quarter it arrives. Have you ever looked upon the morning sunrise amid a mountain range? If so you have seen how the first beams begin to tip with golden splendour the loftiest crags. I think the rosy light that appears at sunrise on the Alps is the most heavenly, and most beautiful, and most glorious material thing that one can witness upon earth. The light begins first of all to tip the edges of the ice upon the highest parts of the mountains; by-and-by clouds begin to gather and mists threaten to intercept his beams. If you had never learned the

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history and the success of the sun's march you would begin to despair of his progress and to expect he will set before his noon. But what do you find? That by-and-by the clouds that threatened to obstruct his advance, by the very fervour of his beams are dissolved in showers that refresh the fainting violet and add volume to the mountain streams; and the mists that threatened to intercept his splendour are dissolved by that very splendour, and scattered, and wholly disappear. So it is with the path of the Christian. The marshes of envy, hatred, ill-will, send up from their deep and pestilential swamps fogs and vapours that seem to shroud his sight and delay his march till he seems to threaten to set at noon; but onward he moves, guided by an inspiration that is not from beneath, and therefore is not dependent on anything on earth; guided by a light that is fed from an inexhaustible and an inextinguishable fountain; till we see the fogs dispersed, and the clouds scattered, and standing on the loftiest height of a Highland mountain we can hear the thunders roll below, and see the mists dissolve deep down in the glen, while eternal sunshine settles upon its head. Not the least precious text in the Bible, if one may make a comparison, is: "I," says the Saviour, "give unto them"—to whom? These poor sheep, some of whom had gone astray, others of whom were fainting and ready to go astray again—"I give unto them eternal life, and none shall be able to pluck them out of my hand." Sooner may Canute repel the advancing waves of the ocean, sooner may Xerxes bind the Hellespont with his royal chains, sooner may Caligula successfully command the clouds that they shall not rain upon his imperial head, than any power in Satan, in the world, or in the world's wicked ones extinguish the light, or arrest the march, or deaden the life, or dim the glory of the humblest child of God and heir of Christ Jesus.

A third trait in the Christian's course is, that his path is not only progressive and victorious, but luminous; it makes all things around it and about it luminous. When we first see the sun rise he rises behind

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some huge hill that seems to intercept his beams completely; and if you had no experience of his march you would suppose he would never get above the level of that hill. You notice, too, how trees and forests seem to obstruct his advance; you wait patiently, and from experience now hopefully, for the time when he will ascend above them all; till the very objects that seem to obstruct his advancing splendour he turns into media and mirrors for reflecting it far and wide. Very soon the trees of the forest become like shafts of light; the very rocks that obstructed his light begin to reflect that light as if they were diamonds, and the broad sea itself consents to be the mirror of his glory, and the clouds put on all the colours of rubies, and amethysts, and sapphires; and everything that threatened at first to the inexperienced eye to impede his advancing path he turns into mirrors of glory, and beauty, and magnificence, to serve his purposes and to reflect his light. So it is with the Christian's progress—the objects that seem at first to obstruct his path and to extinguish his light he makes by a power that is not his own mirrors and reflectors of it. Peter was cast into prison, his limbs were bound with chains; but through the iron prison-bars of that dungeon in Palestine there broke forth a glory that shone from Dan to Beersheba, and covered finally the whole land with its light. The Apostle Paul was cast into the Mamertine dungeon in Rome, because in spite of Cæsar's inhibition he would preach to the perishing poor the unsearchable riches of Christ. But what was the result? The effect of that imprisonment was that he made converts in Cæsar's household; that from the shops, and the markets, and the army and the navy of imperial Rome advocates of Christ stepped forth; and by-and-by the legions of Cæsar felt the light reflected from the character and audible in the words of that prisoner in the Mamertine dungeon. The author of the Apocalypse was banished because of his faithfulness to a solitary isle in the Ægean Sea; but what a splendour has shone from that island! what a glory dwelt in Patmos! what a sunrise streamed

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in its varied apocalyptic splendours from a solitary island in the bosom of the deep! I might add Bunyan at Bedford, and innumerable others of whom the world was not worthy. What an evidence that not only is the Christian's path progressive, not only does it conquer obstructions, but that it seizes the obstructions and makes them luminous with its own light and splendid with its own lustre!

The sun's path when he rises in the morning and moves towards his meridian is a victorious path. He not only makes other objects luminous, but he conquers them and turns them into his own service. The mountain peaks become like telegraphic intimations to the world that the king of day has risen from his orient couch and is on his royal march. The tints of every flower if they could speak would say: O sun, we are created by thee! The fruits that ripen if they could speak would say: O sun, we are ripened by thee! and the dewdrops if they could speak would say: We are made beautiful, more beautiful than the diamonds that sparkle from the noblest hand or adorn the costliest diadem —we are made so by thee; and the warm earth bursting into verdure, and the intelligent world feeling his warmth, would say: We are blessed and benefited by thee. Thus the sun in his march conquers and turns into subjects of his sway those that either obstructed it, or were ignorant of it, or those at least that needed to feel its influence and its power. Such is an illustration of the path of a Christian. He lays his hand on things that are neutral and makes them contributories to his sacred designs. He seizes elements that are hostile and consecrates them to the work and way of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He takes, for instance, printing, that most marvellous discovery, and he makes it subservient to the highest cause, the noblest interests, the divinest ends. I know not any earthly discovery that has so much changed the world as that of printing. The most marvellous thing in the world is that speeches can be spoken at night, and that speakers may be speaking at two o'clock or three o'clock

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in the morning, and that you can read their speeches, not you only, but hundreds of thousands. next morning perfectly reproduced and reflected. The Christian, seeing great power in the printing-press, employs it; seeing great power in speech, he employs it; recognizing the means of glorifying Christ by missions, he charters the ocean steamer, consecrating it to the noblest of ends. Thus the Christian's path becomes a victorious one, making the weakest things contribute to God's praise, and the most reluctant things trophies of God's glory; waiting patiently for that day when all sounds shall be harmony, when all sights shall be beauty, when all feelings shall be bliss, when all hearts shall be bounding and none breaking, and the Prince of Peace shall sway his benign and glorious sceptre from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.

Let me notice one other feature in the sun's rise—his path is a beneficent path. He warms the air as he rises which the invalid is to breathe; he ripens the corn for the sickle of the reaper, when nature recognizing his beneficence and bounty sits amid her ripe sheaves like a mother amid her children blessing and praising God; he sets the bird as he gains power in his march to build its nest, and the farmer to plant and sow; he rends the Polar ice to be a pathway for the imprisoned ship to return to her own shores; and the invalid, feeling the approach of summer, thanks God, and takes hope that the lease of life is likely to be a little longer. His whole path therefore is beneficent. So with the Christian—he walks through the world a blessing, a shower of blessings. Made himself a light from on high, he lets his light so shine that others seeing his good works may glorify his Father which is in heaven. Let me ask, are you thus beneficent? What nook in London has one ray more because you are a Christian? What young or old person in England has a happy memory of you having come into contact with him or with her? What miserable den has been illuminated by the light and splendour of your presence? Of all poor unhappy people upon earth that from the very

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heart I pity, it is those who like a vortex are always absorbing, and never like a fountain welling up in refreshing blessings upon the earth and amidst mankind. We do not know sufficiently the luxury of doing good; and one marvels that any one can walk through this world and not feel it to be an instinct of humanity, and one marvels yet more at what is all but impossible, that any man can be a Christian, and traverse the city, the market, the street, the school, the cottages of the poor, the homes of the wretched, the dens of the depraved, and not try to leave on some spot a memory more glorious than if you had built a magnificent cathedral, and write upon some heart an inscription that will be luminous amidst the light and glories of the eternal morn. For we all know and we ought to feel, what we are very prone to forget, that whilst we are justified by a righteousness that is not our own, that does not excuse us from doing good, but is the mightiest motive-spring to do the highest, the intensest, and the noblest good. And certainly if we may take the picture of the future from that book whose portraits are perfect because inspired, we there read: "Make friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." What does that mean? It is this; you have got wealth, and wealth does not mean enormous sums; any one who has sixpence beyond what he needs is a rich man; he who has only £100 a year and lives on £99 is a rich man, while he who has £100,000 a year and lives on £120,000 a year is a very poor man indeed; but if you have something over, what are you to do with it? The answer is, as a Christian you are to consecrate it to the service of God and the good of your fellow-men. But how will the objects of it receive you into everlasting habitations? What I understand by it is this: that those you have benefited by your liberality, those you have made wiser and happier by your contributions, the widow's heart you have made to sing for joy, the orphan child you have inspired with a sublime hope, or clothed and sheltered from the cold by the raiment you have

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given him, will stand at the very gates of heaven amidst the throngs that are there and bid you welcome, recognizing in you a benefactor, giving God the glory. That does not mean that it entitles you to heaven, but "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, they rest from their labours and their works do follow them." The cup of cold water that you give to a disciple is not forgotten; because it is not merit we do not therefore say it is not fruit; it is the fruit of grace, it is the evidence of a regenerated heart. And you, if I address such, who minister to the world, to the unenlightened light, to the hungry bread, to the naked raiment, to the ignorant instruction, to all a blessing, rejoice that God has honoured you to make you instruments of such goodness; be not proud—God forbid! because it is to grace that you owe all; but be thankful that you are tasting of the highest happiness, which imperial Cæsar had not learnt to recognise—the luxury, the noble, the sublime luxury of doing the greatest good to the greatest number of mankind.

A time draws near when all the clouds that refuse now to be scattered, and all the mists that need to be dissolved, will pass away. At present the sun even in his meridian is in some degree horizontal; but one day the sun will be vertical, and there will be no shadow, and yet there will be no intolerable fervour. At present the best is accompanied with shadows, the purest has the alloy of imperfection; but at that day when the sun shall reach his meridian throne, and shed down no perishable splendour, and shall have no western declension, to be buried in the banks of clouds that gather in the west, but shall shine with a splendour that is never intercepted by a cloud, and never can be wasted by time; then we shall no more look through this body as a poor, thick, rugged glass darkly, nor through this dim medium as an imperfect, twisted, distorted mirror dimly, but we shall see even as we are seen, know even as we are known; and as the material part of our nature becomes thinner, and the spiritual and the nobler becomes stronger, we shall begin to see

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something of the glory before we plunge into it; for it is remarkable that the most eminent Christians in the hour of death have seemed to have seen lifted a nook of the veil that intercepts our view of the eternal world, and to have caught sights, and to have heard sounds, and to have tasted a prelibation and an earnest of that blessedness which shall have no bounds and no end, the blessedness of being for ever with the Lord.

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LECTURE XXVI.

THE JEWISH WORSHIPPERS.

THE cast out and cast down, but not cast off children of Abraham have before them a glorious restoration, for

"*It shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.*"—ISAIAH xi. 11.

ENSIGN is the translation of the Hebrew word Jehovah nissi; "the Lord our standard." The same Hebrew word is applied to the brass serpent; "Ye shall make a serpent of brass, and set it up for a *niss*, a standard." From these two expressions we may justly infer that the standard, or ensign, to be set up in the future is the Saviour himself; and this, therefore, is the true solution of that prediction in Matthew xxiv. 27: "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven," *i. e.* the ensign, the standard. When that ensign, or standard, shall be lifted up, all nations shall see it, and the last and concluding conflict of this economy will take place. The lifting up of this ensign will be the signal for assembling God's scattered people, the tribes of Judah and of Benjamin, which are in our sight; and the assembling from their hiding-places, wherever those hiding-places are, of the ten tribes of Israel now out of

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sight. The promise shall be literally fulfilled: "He shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel"—that is, the ten tribes—"and gather together the dispersed of Judah"—that is, the two tribes—"from the four corners of the earth."

The Jews were the only nation upon earth for whom God selected and consecrated a land. For them he chose the land of Canaan, and to them we read he gave it for a possession for ever. He selected no land for the Greek, no territory for the Roman; but for his people Israel he selected a land, and to that people in the fulness of time he made it over. To them he has still promised it, in words that are not exhausted, as a possession and a heritage for ever. Genesis xii. 7: "Unto thy seed will I give this land." Genesis xiii. 15: "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Genesis xvii. 8: "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan." Genesis xxvi. 3: "Unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries;" speaking to Isaac. Genesis xxxv. 12, to Jacob he says: "The land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land." We invariably read that the land was given to the children of Abraham as an everlasting possession. The question arises, why then do they not possess it now? We find on referring to the Book of Deuteronomy that it was given to them accompanied with certain conditions, observing which they should remain in the land, trampling which under foot they should be cast out of the land, and scattered amid all the nations of the earth. In Deuteronomy xxviii. 15, we read: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee." These curses are enumerated here at great length: "The Lord shall smite thee with blindness, and thou shalt grope at noonday; thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes; the fruit of thy land, and all

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thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway;" and so on to the end of the chapter. The Jews did not keep God's commandments; and therefore they were cast out of that land. But the question remains, are they cast out for ever? or is it theirs still in reversion? Will their return to the observance of the statutes and the ordinances of their God be their reflux as a nation into the land of their fathers, and their resettlement in the midst of that land? In the same book which records the curse that their disobedience brought down, and their dispersion as a portion of that curse, we read, at the 30th chapter, commencing at the 1st verse: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out unto the utmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee; and the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers." That promise has not been fulfilled; their return from Babylon was not the fulfilment of it; they are here spoken of as dispersed amidst all the nations of the earth; and that out of the four corners of heaven and out of Babylon God will collect them, and they shall turn with their whole hearts to the Lord, and shall seek the face of him against whom they have so deeply and so egregiously rebelled. In Jeremiah xxx. we find a promise of this return not only to the two tribes, but to all: "For, lo, the days come, saith the Lord, that I

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will bring again the captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord; and I will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it. And these are the words that the Lord spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah." At the 10th verse: "Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord; neither be dismayed, O Israel; for lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet; and none shall make him afraid." We have, first, the promise of the land for ever; we have, secondly, their forfeiture of the possession of it by their sins; thirdly, God's promise that if they will repent of these sins and return unto him, he will replant them in the land, and settle them in it, and so fulfil his ancient promise: "To thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever." Now it is also worthy of notice that in the punishment inflicted upon the Jews there are two distinct penalties. First, of the ten tribes, it is said in 2 Kings xvii. 18: "He removed them out of sight;" and therefore at this day nobody knows where they are; secondly, it is said of the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin: "They shall be scattered in the sight of all nations." Mark what precision is in the prophecy. Of the ten tribes he predicted that they should be removed utterly out of sight, so that nobody could say where they are; but of the two tribes he says: "They shall be scattered in the sight of all nations," a proverb and a by-word, with no rest for the soles of their feet. That distinction has been kept up. But he says of both, whilst the two tribes are dispersed in the sight of all nations, so that everybody can lay his finger upon one and another, and say, That is a Jew; the ten tribes are scattered and dispersed, but hidden from the sight of all nations. Jeremiah xxx. 11: "Though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Literally has this been fulfilled; he has made an end of the Greek, he has made an end of the Roman. Where

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are the inhabitants of proud Nineveh? where are the people of Thebes, with its hundred gates? where are the nations of heathendom? where is Palmyra in the desert? where are the proud and boasting inhabitants of Babylon? where are the once mighty Medo-Persian armies? God has made a full end of them. But if you ask, where is the Jew? the answer is, where is he not? He is in every land; a people dispersed and scattered, a by-word, in the sight of the nations, as far as relates to the two tribes; and the ten tribes are buried out of sight, according to the prophecy that God would hide them from the sight of all nations. When you read the passages that predict the restoration of this people, bear in mind the punishment has been literal; literally they have been dispersed, literally they have been a by-word, literally they are intermingled with all nations, and are found in the sight of all nations. When you find these very calamities reversed in promises, and the curses turned into prophecies of blessings, is it not logical, and reasonable, and fair to understand by the reversal of the curse their literal restoration to their own land? What is the curse? Dispersion, removal into all nations. What is the reversion of that curse? Their restoration to their own land. Therefore these words are to be literally fulfilled: "The Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria," that is probably part of Mesopotamia, from the banks of the Tigris and the Euphrates, "from Egypt," and from the neighbourhood of the Nile, "and from Pathros, and from Cush," or Ethiopia; "and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath;" and that there may be no place from which he will not recover them, "from the islands of the sea. The envy also of Ephraim," that is, the ten tribes, "shall depart; and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off; Ephraim," the ten tribes, "shall not envy Judah," the two tribes; "and Judah shall not vex Ephraim."

Is it possible, even if it be very difficult, to ascertain, or rather to guess where the ten tribes are? I have col-

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lected all that seems to have been ascertained by way of answer to this question. The first hint that we have of the place into which the ten tribes were driven is in 2 Kings xvii. 6, where he refers to the cities of the Medes, places north of Persia, to which the ten tribes should be driven. In what is called an apocryphal book, a book not inspired, and only of use as a human history, the 2nd Book of Esdras, the 13th chapter, the writer says: "The ten tribes entered on the territory of the Euphrates, and travelled upward a year and a half." Now tribes travelling up the Euphrates, if you trace its course upon a map, and moving for a year and a half, at the slow pace at which ancient or nomad tribes travelled, would reach Central Asia, or the neighbourhood of Thibet, or Tartary, or China. So far we see the route that the ten tribes took on going to their banishment; we see the starting point, and the river along the banks of which they travelled; and the natural and just inference is that they settled somewhere about Thibet, or Tartary, or China. Then it is a very remarkable evidence of their being placed somewhere in the East that the wise men that came to the Saviour with incense, to worship him who was born King of the Jews, several ancient writers believe to have been delegates and representatives of the lost ten tribes. Recollect that Christ was born amid the two tribes in Jerusalem. These wise men spoke of having seen his star. What did they know about his star? They read in their own Bible the prophecy, "A star shall rise out of Jacob," and recognized that star which appeared in the heavens as the fulfilment of the prophecy of a star rising out of Jacob; and then following its leadings, they came to the infant Jesus; and there they recognized him as King of the Jews. Taking all these thoughts together, it seems highly probable that the wise men from the East, bearing incense, coming to worship on the ground of having seen the fulfilment of a prophecy in the Old Testament, and recognizing him as the King of the Jews, were just a deputation from the now lost and hidden ten tribes of Israel; so that the

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ten tribes might by their representatives recognize him that was born as the light to lighten the Gentiles, and one day to be the glory of his people Israel. Another very confirmatory evidence of the ten tribes being somewhere beyond the Euphrates is what Josephus, the Jewish historian, states to have been said by Agrippa when he addressed a body of Jews in the following words: "Why do you Jews stretch your hopes beyond the river Euphrates? Do you think your fellow-tribes will come to your aid? Besides, if they would come, the Parthians would not permit them." This was said to the tribes of Judah 1800 years ago; and evidently Agrippa's impression was that the ten tribes were somewhere near the Parthians and beyond the Euphrates, in some place the locality or nature of which I do not know, which he calls Adia bene. And Jerome, the Latin Father, who wrote in the 4th century, in a note upon the prophet Hosea says: "Unto this day the ten tribes are subject to the kings of the Persians; nor has their captivity ever been loosened."

A very learned Jew of the 12th century, and a very extensive traveller, states that the names of various places in Central Asia are found to be Hebrew, and thereby give indication of the Jews having been there. It is highly probable that at this moment somewhere in Thibet, in Tartary, or in China, the lost ten tribes are existing. The growing complications in China, the disturbances in the East, the strange fanatical tribe of rebels, retaining Scripture truths in their creed, while in their practice repudiating them, indicate that China, or Tartary, or Thibet, is the hiding-place of the ten tribes of Israel. And just as the star in the firmament, the meteor star, gathered Judah and the ten tribes around the cradle of the new-born King, so the ensign lifted up amid the nations will bring the ten tribes from their lurking-place, and Judah and Benjamin from their dispersion; and they shall crown him whom their fathers crucified as Lord and King of all. Such then are the only evidences I have been able to gather upon the present condition of the ten tribes and the two tribes.

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I may now turn to some of those passages that seem to me to prove that the whole of the curse will be reversed; that Palestine will again be repeopled; that it will be the loveliest and the most fertile and beautiful of all lands; that Jerusalem will be rebuilt and restored, and ultimately filled with the glory of the great King—at least I cannot understand the clear, and specific, and reiterated promises and prophecies relating to this subject in any other than a strictly literal sense and interpretation. For instance, we read in Ezekiel xxxvi. 24: "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." This will be apparently not after their conversion, but before their conversion. You heard me say in a previous lecture they will be restored to their own land by the aid of the Gentiles, and in all probability by our own land; but their conversion to God will be by the inspiration of the Spirit of God. Let us mark well the words, Ezekiel xxxvi. 24. First of all, "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land." Mark what follows: "*Then* will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean;" the restoration first, the regeneration and the conversion next. So we find in Zechariah, now, a prophecy written long after the first captivity, and in the 12th chapter, where he predicts the restoration of the Jews, he says in the 10th verse, or rather God says: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives

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apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; all the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." All this shows that they will be, in their own land, resettled as tribes; and whilst they are there God will pour out his Spirit upon them; and those tribes, where they pierced the suffering Saviour, shall look upon the Prince of Peace; and him whom their fathers crucified, rejected, and despised, they will trust in, worship, and adore for ever. It would seem, in the next place, as if the first thing that the Jews will do when they are restored will be to rebuild their temple. I need not tell you that many Jews abroad have been for some time collecting money to build the temple in Jerusalem. This may be a pretence; it may be a vain and a hopeless attempt—that is very probable; but it indicates what is their disposition, desire, and passion. If we turn not to what they are doing, but to the Word of God, in Zechariah vi. we read, at the 12th verse: "Behold the man whose name is The Branch;" that is, Jesus; "and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Here is some temple to be built by the Saviour, not by the Jews. And then in Ezekiel xl., where we have the description of that temple—a most beautiful description—we read that its name shall be Yehovah Shammai, "the Lord is there." A very distinguished architect at my request took the points that I gave him from the closing chapters of Ezekiel, and sketched the whole plan; and the result of the sketch was that Ezekiel's temple can be built in a certain part of Palestine, and only in one part, and that part specified in the prophecy; and when finished, this eminent architect said it would be the most magnificent and splendid edifice that suns ever rose or set upon. People say, But is it not unworthy that there should be a temple? Not at all. Why should there not be a magnificent temple, filled with the

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glory of Him whose glory filled the temple of old; in which there shall be no sacrifices of bulls, and goats, and lambs; but in which shall be the glory between the cherubim, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; around whom in concentric zones millions shall meet, and cast their crowns in golden showers at his feet, and say: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour and glory, and praise, and to have dominion for ever and ever."

To show that this may be literal, let me quote some of the prophecies relating to our Lord's connection in the future with Jerusalem. In Isaiah xxiv. 23, it is said: "The Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." I must take this to be literal. If you say, Mount Zion means the church, and Jerusalem means the church, there is no sense nor consistency in the prophecies of Isaiah. When he says, "Zion shall be ploughed as a field," you understand that to mean literal Zion, which was literally ploughed up by the ploughshares of the Romans. When it says, "The temple shall be cast down, and utterly destroyed, and not one stone left upon another," you understand that to be literal. Why not understand the other passages literally also? In Jeremiah iii. 17, we read: "They shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord." In Zechariah xiv. 9: "The Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." In Ezekiel xliii. 7: "Son of man, the place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile." I accept these words literally. If it can be proved to me that they must be taken figuratively, I am ready to acquiesce; but I have read all that has been said upon both sides, and I take these words as a literal promise: "The place of my throne, and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever, and my holy name, shall the house of Israel no more defile."

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In the New Testament there are allusions that seem to denote a literal fulfilment of these promises. For instance, in Luke i. 32, speaking of the Saviour: "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Again, in Acts i. 6: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" What did Jesus answer? Did he say, Your expectation of a temporal, material, and terrestrial kingdom is a Jewish fable, and a Rabbinical dream, and you must not entertain such a notion? Not at all; he accepted it as a real question, and as an allusion to a real fact; but merely added: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons." They said: "Wilt thou *at this time* restore the kingdom?" He did not say, There will be no such thing restored unto Israel; but, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." Then mark the Saviour's words in Matthew xxiii. 38: "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." In Luke xxi. 24 we read: "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and of course when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled Jerusalem shall cease to be trodden under foot, shall be rebuilt, reconsecrated, and become again the beauty and the joy of the earth. And it is astonishing when you read the Bible how much is associated with this restoration of the Jews. In the Epistle to the Romans the Apostle Paul arguing says: "If the fall of the Jews be the riches of the world;" that is, if the kingdom being taken from them has been followed by that kingdom being given to us; "and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles"—now mark how he argues—"how much more their fulness?" He says, if we got good from their dispersion; if we reaped a

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blessing from their punishment, how vast the blessing, how incalculable the riches that the Gentiles shall reap from the restoration and return of the Jews? And again, argues the Apostle: "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

If it should be answered, what profit is it to explain or to allude to these things, I answer, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Depend upon it God knows and knew what was best for us to read, to learn, and to understand; and if he has covered so many pages of his own word with predictions of the restoration of his ancient people, like all Scripture, it is profitable for instruction and for correction in righteousness. And in the next place, God's prophecies about the Jews should lead us not only to pray for them, but to try to enlighten them. I do not believe that the Jews will be converted till the very close of this economy; but I believe that from the days of Paul, who was a Jew; from the days of our blessed Lord, for he was also a Jew; from the days of the Apostles to the present day, every year there have been two, twenty, and occasionally hundreds brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel of Christ. During the recent outpouring of the Spirit of God in America more Jews have rejoined the Christian church than for two hundred years before. There are at this moment more of the children of Israel in Jerusalem than there have been for eighteen hundred years. The most accomplished professors in the universities of Europe are converted Jews; the great Neander is a converted Jew; and some of the most learned, elaborate, and noble expositions of the books of Scripture have been the productions of regenerated and converted Jews. But while we do believe that the whole nation will be restored, we also believe that they will be indrawn in increasing numbers as the time draws near who will acknowledge Christ as the Messiah. I have had a great many conversations with Jews; and some I have met with, I have been astonished

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to see the increasing fervour and piety beginning to dawn in their hearts. I remember conversing with one whose name is exceedingly known, and whose name is the very representative of wealth, and riches, and influence amid the nations of the earth. I sat next to that lady at dinner at a friend's house, and I asked her if she still cherished the hope of the Messiah? She said that every true Jew did so, and they looked for him and longed for his return. It struck me upon the whole that there was more real piety in that Jewess than in many a loud professor of the Gospel of Christ. And who can say that they may not, amid all their ignorance, error, and misapprehension, catch a glimpse of that Messiah for whom they are looking as a returning conqueror, and see in the 53rd of Isaiah the crucified as the ground of their acceptance and happiness before God? I think the Jewish mind is vastly advanced within the last five and twenty years; that they are ripening for a great change; for some of them positively say that if the Messiah do not come speedily they will either turn Christians or turn atheists—that they cannot remain any longer as they are. The great bulk of them I admit are nothing at all; but alas! great numbers of baptized men are nothing at all. I have no doubt that the mass of the Jews feel no interest in the subject, and I fear multitudes of Christians are in the same plight. But if you take the best of them, you will find a spirit of inquiry, or a spirit of anxiety; a sort of suspicion that something has gone wrong; a sort of fear that the prophecies either are fulfilled or will not be fulfilled at all. And at such a crisis it seems the duty of the Christian church to do everything it can to enlighten them. The order of missionary exertion is to the Jew first, and then to the Gentile. When our Saviour gave his commission he said: "Go and preach the Gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And I believe, therefore, the Christian church that overlooks the Jews in its missionary sympathies will not be blessed in its exertions among the Gentiles.

Now if these things be so, we pray for the peace of

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Jerusalem. I take the words literally: "They shall prosper that love thee; for my friends and my brethren's sake I will say, Peace be within thee!" and we will pray that the day may come speedily when the glory of Jerusalem shall break forth upon the right hand and upon the left; and God's ancient people shall return; and the whole earth shall shine in the glory that dwelt between the cherubim; and all things shall be made new; and Christ and Christian, the new name, shall be all and in all.

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LECTURE XXVII.

FUTURE PRIVILEGES AND JOYS.

THE elements of the world as it will be are in most prophetic pictures of its glory the counterparts of the present inheritance of sin and sorrow. The future is the reversal of every calamity sin has dragged into the present.

"*For the people shall dwell in Zion at Jerusalem: thou shalt weep no more: he will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry: when he shall hear it, he will answer thee. And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.*"—ISAIAH XXX. 19–21.

THIS short passage in Isaiah is an epitome of a corresponding magnificent passage in the Apocalypse. It was the spring, descriptive of a glorious future, out of which Israel drank—the same spring that is open to us more fully, more widely; so that we have privileges and prospects that they, because of their imperfection and infirmity, were not able to cherish or to entertain.

It is here first of all declared of the people of God: "They shall dwell in Zion." "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God," that is to say, the central capital of the earth, when it shall be rebuilt, where the glory between the cherubim shall never be quenched—where shall swell upward an everlasting anthem, an unwearied hallelujah, the holy

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Psalmist's strain on the restored people's lips, without discord, suspension, or end.

But the people shall not only dwell in Zion, we are told, but also at Jerusalem. It is the belief of the soberest interpreters of prophecy that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, that the picture in the 21st chapter of the Apocalypse is so minute, and if I may use an architectural phrase, the specifications are so exact, that no interpretation seems tenable that reduces it to metaphor, and supposes that it is the mere figurative portrait of a glory that will not be limited by material and earthly lineaments. It seems to me that this arises in a great degree from a notion that has taken possession of the minds of many, that all materialism, to use the phrase of the eloquent Dr. Chalmers, is intrinsically and incurably depraved and corrupt. In Dr. Chalmers' sermon, entitled "The New Heavens and the New Earth," we find the most eloquent and graphic portrait of the new heavens and the new earth, and we observe how often he repeats that the very essence and drift of the Christian economy is not to abolish matter, but to regenerate matter; not to destroy the world, but to disinfect the world; and that what he calls the "grossness of materialism" is not necessarily inseparable from the grossness of sin; and that the future will be, not, as he expresses it, some airy, transcendental place, of which we have no definite notion whatever, and which is the only hope of thousands, but a regenerated earth, a repurified atmosphere, a reconsecrated heavens, and over it a glory, and settled upon it a splendour, and pervading it all a beauty, a blessedness and a repose, moral, intellectual, and physical, of which we can have but dim and obscure conceptions in this condition of ours. The constant hope from Genesis to Revelation of all that have gone before us is—for what? A city. Abraham looked for a city that hath foundations. What foundations? Every manner of precious stone, whose maker and whose builder is God, enters into the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven, adorned like a bride prepared for the bridegroom. How comes it that throughout the New

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Testament we are constantly told to hope for a city? Christians are told that they are citizens of no mean city, and the Apocalypse tells us of a city that cometh down from heaven, the dimensions of which are given, the constituent glories of which are laid out, and to which all that God made shall be a contribution, and from which all that Satan corrupted shall be expelled for ever and for evermore. It is said to consist of twelve manner of precious stones, and as if to show that figurative interpretation is impossible, these twelve precious stones are named every one of them. The two most beautiful things in this world that sin has spared are the bright flowers of June and the precious stones in the earth. Ever as I gather a flower, and look at it, and study it, I find an apocalypse of beauty and loving-kindness in it. So I take a diamond, a precious stone, and feel that it is a sort of permanent and everlasting flower, having all the beauty of the blossom without its evanescence and decay. These precious stones seem to me sometimes as if they were the exploded and shattered fragments of some terrible convulsion. And it looks as if God will collect and reunite them, and show that his own grand idea lost in Paradise that was, shall yet be recovered in the world as it will be, and that the devil shall not be able to take one stone, one flower, one living thing, of which he shall be able to say: "This is my trophy, and this is to be the glory of my success." Such then is the portrait of that future to which all past ages will contribute.

Then we read in this beautiful passage: "Thou shalt weep no more," translated into the Apocalyptic language—"He will wipe out every tear from all eyes," or as it is expressed in other passages: "The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in it." "The days of her mourning shall be ended." "The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away;" or as it is afterwards expressed in the Apocalypse: "And God shall wipe away all tears

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from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away;" that is to say, there shall be no springs of sorrow in the heart to start the tear in the eye. What is a tear? It is one of the characteristic marks of the greatness and the sin of our race. The brutes do not weep. It is evidence of the grandeur of man's nature that he weeps. It is the evidence that something has gone wrong with him that he must weep; but in that state all the sources and the springs of tears shall be extinguished and dried up. There shall be no law in our fallen nature warring against the law of our spirit, no shadow shall darken the mind with its wing, no storm shall beat upon the heart, no fever shall rack the frame, no disappointment vex, no calamity annoy; the very fountains of tears shall be dried up, and tears shall be impossible, unless there shall fall that strange tear, the tear that springs from excess of joy. There shall be no weeping then. There will be no bereavements, no losses, no Rachels weeping for their children, and who will not be comforted. There shall be no green sod in which you shall have a freehold. There will be no graves in which you will feel an interest; but death—that death that separates the protégé from his patron, the child from his parent, the friend from his friend—shall for ever disappear, like a mist before the rising sunshine, and there shall be no more weeping. No afflictions shall travel, like clouds, across that sunny sky. Lines of glory shall supersede the lines and traces of suffering and of sorrow, and all shall be happy because all shall be holy. "Thou shalt weep no more."

Then it is beautifully predicted, as a feature in this high and happy state, that "he will be very gracious to thee at the voice of thy crying." I have sometimes ventured to say, what perhaps was scarcely correct, that in the future rest, or millennial state, there will be no prayer. Perhaps that is not true. The very essence of creatureship is dependence. The very essence of a limited creature is the necessity of ceaseless supply.

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But the prayer then will not be the agonised cry of the present. It will be want no sooner felt than filled; it will be conscious want and instant supply, rapid and inseparable as sound and its echo, as cause and its effect. When we pray here we often know not what to pray for as we ought. There we shall know what to pray for. It is there promised that "it shall come to pass that before they call"—what a thought is that!—"before they call, I will answer; and whilst they are yet speaking, I will hear." What a startling truth! It is only paralleled by that beautiful passage, where Jesus tells Peter what he tells every Christian: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have anticipated him, I have prepared for the assault, for I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Christ had prayed for Peter's safety before Peter's accuser had asked for liberty to attack him. God will answer our prayers before we present them. And that suggests a thought which is a great spring of happiness now, that God hears your prayers before you speak them. We all know how yearnings rise from our hearts like bubbles from the depths of the deep sea, that we cannot find language to define, and that we ourselves imperfectly apprehend. What are these? These are the unspoken prayers of human hearts; and the unspoken prayers of human hearts are heard by the prayer-hearing God; and before you have presented your desire in words, God has sent down an answer in facts exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or desire. The Lord then "will be very gracious unto thee at the voice of thy cry; when he shall hear it, he will answer thee."

"Though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction." That is descriptive not of the future, but of the present. He says: "You shall dwell in Zion; he will be gracious; though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction" now; that is, at this moment; "yet shall not thy teachers be removed." We have therefore the description of the present lot, "the bread of adversity

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and the water of affliction." That tribulation, that great one, is the summary and the consummation of all the crimes and the troubles through which humanity has passed in its voyage to the haven of eternal joy. It is the experience of us all that in some shape at some time troubles beset us. We are all apt to think that when a special trouble is on us, it is the sorest; and very often if we murmur, because of the present trouble, and fret, and say, "I could have borne any other trouble but this," God sends another and a worse, because he desires that you should have confidence in him. Man is born unto trouble now, we are told, as the sparks fly upwards. Not a sun that rises but reveals broken hearts and weeping eyes somewhere. Daily the music of glad halls is turned into mourning; and not a sun sets that does not close upon some new trouble, and introduce some new trial; and sleep, to which we flee as the great opiate of mankind, is the fallow of the mind, but it is not the healer of the heart. The sting in the heart with which you fall asleep is not extracted in soft and dewy sleep, nature's sweet restorer; it is felt with all its keenness on the morrow; and there are mourners that will not be comforted; there are eyes, of which it may be said, they are acquainted only with tears; there are griefs which no time can heal; there are hairs white, not by age, but by trouble; and there are brows furrowed, not by years, but by the anxieties, the griefs, and sorrows which have passed over them; and there are tables on which the bread of adversity is oftenest broken, and on which the water of affliction is oftenest placed. Such is mankind now. Yet even of these troubles, the apostle tells us: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." If we be, not wood, hay, stubble, but precious stones, or gold, or silver, then afflictions only take off the oxides that the world's atmosphere has left upon us. If we be precious stones, we are so precious, that Christ will never cast us aside. The most precious stones, we know, need the greatest labour to polish

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them. Those that God loves best the tools of polishing are most frequently and constantly upon. It is one of the marks of God's people that in some shape they come through great tribulation. Some of us may not have tasted it yet, but it will come; and if we are spared the personal trouble that gnaws the heart, there is that great one, that storm which will test the ship, that hurricane that will concentrate all our thoughts, that sea of tempest in which are many reefs, and on which many will make everlasting shipwreck, but across which, if we be God's people, we shall be borne —not, like Noah's ark, to be left upon Ararat, whence to go down upon a world depopulated and dismantled, but we shall be introduced into that haven into which no trouble whatever can come, and on which no storm can beat. It is a precious truth that the sharpest trial will be the shortest, and the severest the most profitable; and we shall learn best the lesson, which it is easier to teach than to feel, that if I be a Christian, whatever happens to me, however disastrous, long, or poignant, there is not one drop of wrath in it, or one atom of vengeance, and there is "a needs be" for it, and a purpose of beneficence beyond it. It is, whatever be its aspect, a contribution to a great issue. It is God's preparing us for a nobler, a better, and a more glorious destiny. The Apostle Paul, who had been in all sorts of troubles, could speak of them in this way—"our light affliction." What in the world could induce the Apostle Paul to say "our light affliction?" He was in "perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by his own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;" he was in prison; he was scourged; he was reproached; he was maltreated; in every shape that torture could be inflicted he had experience of it. What could tempt him to say "our light affliction?" The explanation is this. If you love an object it is wonderful how much you will risk, dare, and undergo in order to reach that object. The affection of love in a human heart makes the roughest road

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smooth, the steepest hill easy, the biting frosts, the beating winds, or the torrid heat to be all tolerable, because you are animated by that great passion that strengthens and nerves for the hardest service, and for certain victory. The Apostle Paul's love to his Saviour was so strong that he said what he felt, that the affliction he endured was light. So the patriarch, speaking of his love for Rachel, said that the seven years appeared but as a few days for the love that he bare her. How much more in the instance of Divine love! Divine love kindled in the human heart will think what others only dream of, speak what others only think, and triumph where others strive and fail.

"Yet shall not thy teachers be removed out of thy sight." What a beautiful thought is this—"Thy teachers shall not be removed out of thy sight!" They are often removed now. Where are the teachers of your infancy, your boyhood, and your youth? There spring up dreary and desolate feelings when one grows up to manhood, and looks back upon the scenes of his youth. Look back any who have attained to forty or fifty or sixty years of age—look back. The friends of your youth, the teachers of your first lessons, those with whom you spent so many sunny hours, those with whom you took sweet counsel together—where are they? Echo on earth only repeats your words. A voice from heaven comes down, like music from the sky, saying: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, from henceforth they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Our teachers we shall not be deprived of any more; that is to say, there shall be no ignorance there to dissipate, no error striking its roots in our hearts to be dug up, no uncharitableness, no suspicion, no doubt, no difficulty; for thine eyes shall see and thine ears shall hear thy teachers. At that bright day everything we see shall be a teacher. It was so in Paradise, and the reason it is not so now is that sin has stained the lesson book, and all but struck dumb the teacher; but when sin shall have fled from God's renovated world,

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when imperfection shall be done away with, and perfection without limits, and love and life without end, shall be our experience, then God's mind shall be seen written on the stars in the sky, and his will shall be legible in the flowers on the earth. Every stream by its chimes as it rolls to the sea will be a teacher; every wave as it breaks upon the shore will be a teacher; the dewdrops, like jewels, shall reflect Christ's grand name; the sea, like a bright mirror, shall throw up and fling back his glory; every rose shall remind you of Sharon's rose; every star, of the bright and morning star; and all things in the height and all things in the depth, and the whole universe itself shall teach marvellous lessons. In the words of a poetess lately deceased, who has written true poetry, inspired often with the noblest sentiment—

"Christ will send us down the angels,
And the whole earth and the skies
Will be illumed by altar candles
Lit for blessed mysteries;
And a priest's hand through creation
Waveth calm and consecration."

Or, in the words of an American poet—

"The ocean looketh up to heaven,
As 'twere a living thing;
The homage of its waves is given
In ceaseless worshipping.

"They kneel upon the sloping sands,
As bends the human knee,
A beautiful and tireless band,
The priesthood of the sea.

"The green earth sends its incense up
From every mountain shrine,
From every flower and dewy cup
That greeteth the sunshine.

"The sky is as a temple arch,
The blue and wavy air
Is glorious with the spirit march
Of messengers of prayer.

"The gentle moon, the kindling sun,
The many stars are given
As shrines to burn earth's incense on—
The altar-fires of heaven."

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But human poetry cannot reach or overtake the magnificence of the spectacle of the world that will be. It has been left for the apocalyptic pen justly and truly to portray it; and only in that grand Apocalypse can we see what a glory will settle down upon our world when all things will be made new. What a radiant lesson book will this universe be, and what a blessed heaven is in reversion for those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth! The future and everlasting rest will not be spent in ceaselessly singing, or in ceaselessly reading the picture and comparing it with the original; but we shall grow in all kinds and in all degrees of knowledge. The telescope gives us now but a glimpse of the magnificence of that universe which we shall then see no more through a glass darkly. The mere outposts and sentinels of that brilliant army are all that even the telescope can overtake. The microscope shows us that even in a drop of water, on a blade of grass, on a young bud, on a tender root, are mysteries the most marvellous, and evidences of wisdom, skill, and beneficence the most untiring. In the world as it will be we shall be in a state where the microscope must be imperfection, where the telescope will be useless; and when we shall see as we are seen into all heights and all depths, and penetrate all mysteries, and unravel all difficulties, I can really comprehend that there is in reserve for us a joy unspeakable and full of glory, when the glass through which we now see darkly and dimly shall be shattered, and we shall see as we are seen, and know even as we are known. Who does not wish for that noon of time, that brilliant close of the chequered universe, the fulfilment of this grand prophecy, the realization of this living and blessed hope, when there shall be no sin to vex, no disappointments to fret, no evil to intrude, no tears, no death, no crying, no pain, but when there shall be positively the glory of Deity, the presence of the Lamb—the reunion with all that we parted with on earth, whom we would have kept because we loved them, but whom God took because he loved them more—faces in the shadow of the

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grave shall emerge into the sunshine, voices now silent in death shall be heard in more musical reverberations, footsteps familiar in their fall as household words shall be heard again, and those we parted with, we wickedly said for ever, we shall then thankfully hail, the broken circle will be completed, and the missing links found, for all things are made new.

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LECTURE XXVIII.

THE CURSE TURNED INTO BLESSING.

NEITHER earth, nor air, nor sky—neither man, nor beast, nor bird, nor fish is as originally made. A great curse fell on all six thousand years ago. But there shall be

"*No more curse.*"—REVELATION xxii. 3.

THE primal curse is written in these words: "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children: and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Gen. iii. 16-19. On the descent of that curse the brutes of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea underwent a total change, not of shape or plumage, perhaps, but of disposition. Is it possible to believe that the whole brute creation was originally constituted as we now find it? that creatures called into being by a benevolent God, whose were the resources of infinite wisdom, devoured each other in Paradise? that man's eyes were originally meant to gaze on bloodshed, and witness the horrors of a battle-field; and his ears to hear, amid the melody of brooks and the music of winds, the cries of creation groaning in pain and seeking to be delivered?

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God made all peaceful and happy; sin altered their very nature, and modified, it is probable, even their physical organization. The predictions of the future paradise imply the disastrous change that passed upon everything connected with the first: "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox;" the curse shall be rolled away, the incubus of evil shall be withdrawn, and all things restored to their pristine perfection. It may here be asked, however, if it was reasonable or just to curse the animals because man had sinned? If God has recorded it as fact, we may be perfectly satisfied it is alike reasonable and just. But the reason seems plain: the creatures were made for man, to beautify his home, to minister to his wants, and to obey his royal behests. Man's sin spread its eclipse over all the earth, and turned the birds of the air, the beasts of the earth, and the fishes of the sea, into enemies, that fly from him in terror, or turn upon him in fury. The lord of creation fell, and all his vassals fell in him and with him.

In that part of the curse which especially relates to man, the woman is first singled out as its subject; first in the transgression, she was sentenced to be first also in suffering. Her sorrow is described in Scripture as the keenest which human nature feels—a sorrow that brings her sometimes to the grave, and leaves only the motherless memento. The next punishment denounced upon the woman is her dependence on man, or the surrender of her individual freedom, in order to accomplish the ends of her existence upon earth. The whole history of our race is the painful evidence of this. This subjection is lightened where Christianity prevails by compensatory glories; and her loss of liberty is forgotten in her inheritance of love. Inferior as she is by position, she rises to an equality by grace. But this blessing is not of nature, but from the Gospel; and woman, in Christian lands, does not present the complete fulfilment of the curse denounced originally upon her. In heathen lands the curse is visibly struck into her existence; for there she has neither the dignity of

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woman, nor the protection of the slave, nor the joys of the mother. Woman remains in India just as she was left at the fall—the inheritor of a corroding and consuming curse, which cleaves to her like life itself.

The curse fell in scathing fury upon the ground. It was created beautiful, prolific, and good; but when sin fell upon it, like a blot radiating from the centre to the circumference, the curse of barrenness followed. It is now sown thick with graves. The cypress grows where the tree of life stood; and melancholy requiems have taken the place of its primeval jubilee. The rose that Eve carried forth from Paradise withered in her hand, and tnrned to corruption; and the sun that rose so beautifully that morning, set in storms. The rolling thunder and the rending lightnings still leave wrecks behind them. The yawning earth occasionally gulps down great capitals, and buries a mighty population in a common tomb. The roaring flood sweeps away corn, and cattle, and villages, and all man's husbandry to the main; and the unsatiated sea still buries proud navies in its waters, and roars for yet nobler victims; and hailstones descend like destroying angels from the sky, and blast the choicest fruits of the soil; and famine, and pestilence, and plague still indicate their common parentage —the curse. These groans of creation are the echoes of the judgment pronounced in Eden—these seared and blasted deserts are made so by the sirocco of sin; the infected house proves the presence of the infected tenant; disorders in the estate give evidence of moral disease in the owner of it. The world lost its beauty when man parted with his innocence: thorns sprang from sin-seeds, and earth grew barren because her lord had become guilty; and we have only to see disorder in the elements, to be satisfied that there is a difference between man and God. Earth become rebellious, selfish, avaricious, must be ploughed and torn by instruments of iron, and watered with the tears of man's eyes, and fertilized with the sweat of man's brow, before it will yield him any sustenance. Of itself it produces only weeds that are worthless, or fruits that are poi-

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sonous, and always insects that eat up what we sow—as if nature were indignant with man, and desirous of avenging her wrongs upon him. Man rose against God, and that instant all creation rose against man. And "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." See the slave in the mine, the husbandman in the fields, the sailor on the ocean, the soldier in battle, and the labourer in the workshop, in order to perceive the rebound of man's sin in paradise; and where there is less physical, there is more mental wear and tear; and where wealth is the greatest, it is only the glittering mask that conceals the agony within. The curse cleaves close to the human heart—corrosive, consuming, defying all antidote but one; sometimes covered, sometimes gilded, but never extirpated, except in the experience of the child of God.

"In the day thou eatest thou shalt die; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," is a no less obvious result of the primeval curse. Disease, consumption, fever, grey hairs, and death, constitute the long dark procession from the gates of Paradise, and disappear only in the receptacle which none can stave off—the grave. Infants and aged patriarchs die; kings on their thrones, and judges on their tribunals, die; and no sanctuary or altar-horns can protect from the stroke of death. No beauty or birth can bid away the king of terrors; the Methuselah of a thousand years, and the infant of yesterday must die. Adam bore patiently the calamities of the fall till he saw for the first time death, in the cold limbs and the pallid face of Abel. Death is the image of sin, the portrait of our guilt, the wages of iniquity.

Exile from Eden was also a portion of the primeval curse, for it is written, "He drove out the man." Eden lost its attractions, for man had lost his susceptibility of them. The tree of knowledge waved its branches from afar, but it was as the memorial only of our crime. The tree of life lost not its magnificence and glory, but man had no access to it. He who lived the one day beneath

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the wings of angels, wandered the next day under a roofless world; beginning that distance from God, the utmost aphelion of which is hell.—The curse fell on man's intellect also. Once his soaring thoughts reached the presence of the seraphim; and ever as they rose in the heights, or descended in the depths, he saw in the one the image, and in the other the footprints of Deity. This great intellect is now darkened, distorted, enfeebled, and its powers frequently lavished on ignoble and unworthy objects. Has not genius frequently aided the assassin, and become the ally of the robber? Has it not carried ambition to thrones through a sea of blood, and avarice to fortune through all kinds of tortuous and wicked courses; manifesting itself as the drudge of sin, the hack of Satan, the pioneer of accumulated evil? In poetry, which ought to sing only the good, the beautiful, the true, how much of evil has genius manifested? If Milton has celebrated in song the glories and also the exiles of Eden, has not Shelley gilded with its charms what he had depravity to imagine —souls without hope and a world without God? If Cowper has covered with new beauty domestic life and real religion and Christian worth, has not Byron withered with infidel sarcasm whatever of divine holiness or human happiness he was permitted to touch? Nor has science escaped the universal curse. Has not geology emerged at times from its subterranean researches, and shouted in triumph, "No God?" Has not astronomy risen on outspread pinion, and, after visiting suns and systems, alighted on the earth, and told mankind that in the vestiges of creation there is no vestige of a Creator? Have not Volney and others visited the east and the west, and opened the sarcophagi of ancient kings, and explored pyramidal chambers, and traced the Nile, and crossed the Jordan, and sailed upon the sea of Galilee, and walked in Gethsemane, and stood on Ararat, Zion, and Calvary,—and denounced the everlasting Gospel as a fable? Have not naturalists gazed upon the light of morn beautiful as an infant, and on the shadows of evening mellowed like age,

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and on the buds of spring, and on the falling leaves of autumn, and on the drifted snow, and on the driving showers, and alleged that they saw nothing higher than the balancing of the air, the motion of the earth, the evaporation of the waters?

But this curse shall be cast out. The vast universe shall yet glow with Deity; creation shall be seen to be the chamber of his presence, the dwelling-place of his power, the receptacle of his designs, the autograph of our Father; and astronomy, and literature, and geology, and chemistry, and poetry, shall hear with arrested ears and delighted hearts, the "Lord God walking in the garden" of creation "in the cool of the day." Isaiah lx. shall become actual: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee. The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come: they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee: the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee: they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar, and I will glorify the house of my glory. Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows? Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God: and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall

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build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; nay, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteousness: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

The curse shall be lifted off man's heart. How great

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must be that depravity which renders the motives, hopes, and fears of eternity absolutely inefficacious till they are applied by God himself! It must be an all but infinite curse that needs an Omnipotent hand in order to remove it. Fallen man has worshipped the things he made—turned his very vices into gods; and architecture has raised a pantheon for their reception, and poets have sung their depravity as sublime heroism. What a concentration of the curse was there in that one man, Voltaire!—a man to whom the love of man and the fear of God were a nullity; whose joy consisted in tearing from the human heart its best hopes, and from the social system its only cement; who gloried only in wreck; whose favourite weapons were sarcasm and lies. Experience, in his case, confirms the Divine testimony: "The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Inspiration has asked and answered the question, "Whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even from your lusts that war in your members?" Lands intersected by a narrow path abhor each other. Mountains interposed make enemies of nations, who had else, like kindred drops, been mingled into one.—The curse lies sore and heavy on man's body. We need not enumerate the diseases "that flesh is heir to," or prove that these are the offspring of the curse. This body is now as often a hindrance as it is a help to the soul. Often is it a strong obstruction to communion with God; and by all of us it is felt to be the battle-field between heaven and hell.

The curse shall be lifted away from all places on which it now lies: it shall be no more on Ebal, nor on Jerusalem, nor upon Sinai. No Balak shall say, "Come, curse me Israel;" it shall no more be said, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be anathema;" nor, "If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be anathema." The offence shall be impossible, and the curse unknown! It shall no more be written, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from

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the Lord." Deut. xxviii. 16-19, shall be repealed; it shall no more be said, "Depart, ye cursed," for there shall be no more utter destruction. In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, "Holiness unto the Lord;" and in that day there shall be "no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord."

Creation, at that day, shall lay aside the ashen garments which it has worn for many thousand years, and put on its Easter robes. It, too, has its regeneration: like some nurse of a royal child which it has reared, she shall be remembered and raised to dignity when he mounts his throne. The first Adam lost the garden, and inherited the wilderness. The second Adam took up the battle just where the first left off; and in the wilderness fought the foe, and won back Paradise for man; and a foretaste and earnest of final victory was presented in his wonderful works. Each miracle was a germ of Paradise, and triumphant evidence that all creation was soft and pliant in his hand. Each miracle was a foretoken, and forelight, and firstfruit of the restoration of all creation. When he healed the sick, that cure was a forelight of the sickless state. When he raised the dead, that act was a foretoken of the first resurrection. When he calmed the storm, there was seen a firstfruit of that everlasting calm which his priestly hand shall wave over all creation. That pierced hand of the Babe of Bethlehem shall seize the sceptre of the universe, and lay its touch upon the ocean's waves; and his word, like a resistless spell, shall go down to nature's depths and up to nature's heights, and hallow all space to be a temple of Deity. Earth shall become a glorious Gerizim; there shall no more be in it the common or the unclean; there shall be no more curse, for Christ was made a curse for us.

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LECTURE XXIX.

THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS.

THE theme of the noble army of martyrs is so rich in hope and glory that I revert to it, in order more fully to depict it.

"*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*"—REVELATION vii. 9, 10.

THE idea embodied in the seventh chapter of the Apocalypse is this, that the great mass of the visible church had become corrupt and apostate, and that out of the midst of it God was selecting the millennial church, sealing every member, and fitting him for glory, honour, and for immortality. If there be one lesson more striking than another taught in this blessed book it is that the visible church, stretching from the days of Augustine down to the days of Martin Luther, was not the true church, but the manifest apostacy; and that the true succession, the real apostolical succession, was not through priests and prelates in the Roman Catholic apostacy, but in true Christians, often hated, often proscribed and persecuted, but never extinguished; stretching from Augustine through the Waldenses in the west, the Paulicians in the east, till it merged in Luther and the Protestants of the Reformation, and spreads over the world at this day, increased and still increasing. If any one will read the most interesting sketch of Merle d'Aubigné, or will have recourse to authentic documents accessible to the learned, he will find that

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those prelates who were princes, whose churches were cathedrals, whose worship was pomp, and splendour, and ceremonial, were not the true ambassadors of Christ; that they preached a gospel which was another gospel, not the Gospel of Christ Jesus; and that then and there, and during that eclipse, the true church, the woman in the 12th chapter, had fled into the wilderness—that the witnesses were buried in the dens, and caves, and sequestered nooks and deserts of the earth; and that then, as now, the world knew them not. It is a pity that any should pretend to trace the apostolical succession through prelates that carried the crozier in one hand and the sword in the other, through priests that preached no Gospel, and loved no Saviour, and opened no Bible, instead of tracing it through those meek but often martyred men who, when religion was a shame and the profession of it was death, still held fast amid the Cottian Alps, and have left their bones bleaching amid the Alpine mountains' cold. These were the true Christians, these the true succession; and very beautifully are they called in this very book "the witnesses." What is the original word for martyr? "Martyr," in the Greek, means simply "one that witnesses." What is the meaning of the word Protestant? *Protestor;* "I protest;" *pro,* "for;" *testis,* "a witness." The witnesses, therefore, described in the Apocalypse are the Protestants, the martyrs; those that testified from the commencement onward to the close; and when at the Diet of Spires the name *Protestantes,* witnesses, was assumed by Luther and those who were associated with him, unconsciously they vindicated in that name their inheritance of the descent of the witnesses of old, and stamped themselves that true and legitimate succession the commencement of which was at the cross on Calvary, the coronal of which is a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Whilst the great apostacy gathered bulk there took place a symbolic sealing, marking off the true church in the midst of the apostate church. I do not deny that there were Christians in the Church of Rome; I believe at this moment there are true Christians in it.

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We have evidence irresistible that under the worst of systems there may be good men; not to teach us that the system is to be lightly spoken of, but to show us how mighty is that grace which can burst through the eclipse of the system, and touch and transform into the likeness of Christ them that are in it but not of it. The truth is there are Papists in the Protestant Church, and there are Protestants in the Popish Church. It is not connection with a church that makes a Christian, but connection with Christ Jesus. In the earliest records of the middle ages we find many a one that struggled hard against a system of apostacy that did not like to abandon what he thought the true church, and lived and died in it a martyr. The biography of Martin Boos proves this. He was a priest of the Church of Rome, he ministered at her altars to his death, and yet from first to last he was a holy, spiritually-minded, and devoted Christian. He was persecuted, he was threatened, he was maligned, he was spoiled of all that he had, just because he held that the mass was a memorial, not a sacrifice; because he held that the Virgin Mary was not to be worshipped. To uphold the consistency of his position is one thing, but that there was a true Christian struggling against that system is, I think, the conclusion that every fair and impartial judgment must come to. Who can doubt, on the other hand, that Pascal was a Christian? yet he lived in the Church of Rome, proscribed by it as a Jansenist. Who, again, can doubt that Quesnel, that wrote the propositions condemned in the Bull Unigenitus by Clement in 1713, was a Christian? All that he said, and felt, and did, proves that he was. But still these are not proofs that the system is good. People say, "How uncharitable to condemn the Church of Rome! Was there not a Quesnel in it? Was there not a Pascal? Was there not the celebrated Archbishop Fénelon in it? How can you attack such a system?" I answer, a single beautiful and fragrant flower upon the Alps that the frosts have not nipped and the cold winds have not blasted does not prove that the Alps are a genial and

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prolific soil; it only proves how vegetable life can resist the most disastrous of circumstances, and bud and blossom notwithstanding. So these Christians in the Church of Rome are not evidences that the soil of the system is good; but how mighty is that grace which in the most unpropitious of circumstances can transform, and sanctify, and develop true Christians notwithstanding!

After this symbolic sealing of the saints of God in the midst of that apostacy to which this chapter especially alludes, there is a description of the saints in glory, from the 9th verse onward to the close, the most poetical, the most beautiful, ever conceived by human mind or recorded in human speech. First it tells us that the saved are "a great multitude." Happy thought! not a handful, as the bigot says—not all men, as the latitudinarian says—but a great multitude, and so great that no man could number it. I know the objections made. First, it is said, we see that the majority of the human race are not Christians: I think that is evident enough. Take the whole mass of professing Christendom, and I doubt if it constitutes a fourth of the human family. Then divide and disintegrate that mass, and you find two-thirds of it are involved in dense Russian or Romish superstition. Take, again, the remaining third professing to be Protestants, and how many are in Israel who are not of Israel; and the conclusion forced upon one is, that many are called, but that few are chosen—that broad is the way that leads to ruin, and many there be that beat it. You ask, how then can we account for a great multitude? I believe that that multitude will be the overwhelming majority of the human race. First, in the last ages of the church all will be Christian without exception; secondly, as already shown, in every age of the church all infants dying in infancy, whether baptized or unbaptized, whether their mothers were Christians, Mahometans, or Hindoos, are admitted to, and grow to perfection in, glory. And if it be true that half the human family die before ten years of age, we can see in every generation a great majority on the whole

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passing into everlasting life. But whatever be the *data* or the elements of the conclusion, the fact of the result is evident when it says: "A great multitude that no man can number of all nations"—not Christian nations only—"and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood"—the attitude of dignity—"before the throne"—the place of greatness—"clothed with white robes"—the righteousness which is their title—"with palms in their hands"—the marks and symbols of victory—"and they praised God, saying, Salvation unto our God that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." This seems to prove that there are no Unitarians there. I do not say the Unitarian must in every individual case be lost; I only say that this transient gleam of the happiness of the blessed—this anthem peal, borne in its echoes from heaven to earth—shows that the great multitude composed of all nations, worshipped and adored the Lamb, that is, Jesus Christ, as the object of their worship; therefore God over all, blessed for evermore. And, secondly, it would seem to me, while not asserting that all Roman Catholics are lost—God forbid!—that there are no Roman Catholics in heaven. Not one note of a song to the Virgin is heard, not even the mention of her name; but the anthem peal swells from the mighty multitude undivided, "Unto God, even the Lamb that sits upon the throne." Would it not be better if Roman Catholics worshipped upon earth him only who alone is worshipped in heaven? Would it not be better if Unitarians worshipped him now who is as a matter of fact adored and worshipped as God in heaven?

There is the symbolic statement of a question: "What are these in white robes?" Some one was startled by the sight. Evidently they were not natives, plainly they were emigrants and colonists; they had been translated there. A native of the place asks, "Who are these that are arrayed in white robes?" And one said, "How can you be ignorant of this? Surely thou knowest." And then he said, "But if you do not, let me explain to you; I will tell you who they are. These are they which came out of that great

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tribulation:" "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." And this is their right to be in heaven: "they have washed their robes and made them white." The Greek word does not signify innocence, but *purified*: "They have made them white in the blood of the Lamb." And then it adds, "Therefore on this account are they before the throne." What is their title to stand there? Not anything they have done, but this, that their robes are white through the blood of the Lamb: "And they serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them." *Shechinah* is derived from a Hebrew verb, shakan, which means "to dwell." The expression, "He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them," if written in Hebrew would be, "He that sitteth upon the throne shall be the *shechinah* in the midst of them;" connecting the glory that burned betweeen the cherubim with the glory that burns on the new earth, the symbol of the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. To show that it is the symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ, "The Word," says John in his Gospel, "was made flesh and dwelt among us." If that had been written in the Hebrew it would have been, "The Word was made flesh and was the *shechinah* in the midst of us." Now says John in the Apocalypse, that same Word shall be the *shechinah* in the Millennial Rest. Those that are there "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." That expression, "wipe away," is literally, "wipe out all tears from all eyes." "And God shall weep out all tears or streams of sorrow that flow from all eyes that have been fountains for such streams through life." In other words, He will not only extinguish tears, but dry up the very spring and fountain of tears, that the happiness of the redeemed in heaven may be perfect and without ceasing. It is a blessed hope that the

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future will be filled by a great multitude, while they that are not there will be entirely self-excluded. In that great multitude will be patriarchs of ancient days, prophets, saints, apostles, martyrs, evangelists, and ancient Christians, Abraham, Isaac, Isaiah, Jeremiah, John, and Augustine, and Vigilantius, and Peter Waldo, and Luther, and Calvin, and innumerable others, clad in white robes, with palms in their hands, singing, "Salvation to our God." Some have come from the sands of distant deserts,—some from the depths of the unsounded ocean,—some from beneath battle-sods. The icebergs in the polar realms will rend asunder when the trumpet sounds, and the dead that are there shall come forth. They too that expired in the fires of martyrdom are there; thousands who have suffered and been silent—the martyrdom the heart feels, but the trumpet does not roll abroad in multiplying echoes—will also be there. Not one blossom will be withered, not one sheaf will be lost, not one gem will be wanting. The complete number of the sons of God, the heirs of glory, will constitute the church in heaven—the mighty multitude that no man can number. Not one trace of disease, or of the smoke of the fires; not one channel for a tear is left, nor a memorial of tears that rolled in it, will be there. All the marks of corruption have disappeared; and innumerable as the stars in the sky, countless as the sands on the sea-shore, brilliant as the morning dews in an unsetting sun, beyond the limits of sect, unscathed by the distinctions of party, will be a great multitude on a regenerated earth that have no head but Christ, no name but Christian, and no song but salvation to our God and to the Lamb that sitteth on the throne.

The Jew restricted the Gospel to his own; he believed that beyond the plains of Palestine no glad sound could ring, no offer of mercy could be made. He thought religion was inspired for him, and for nobody in the world besides; the limits that God laid down he made tighter, the distinctions that God recognized he wrote deeper. But now this multitude is com-

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posed not of Jews, but of all nations; the monopoly of the Jew has become the heritage of all mankind. The national reservoir which was once so full in Jerusalem has now overflowed and become a mighty stream, and where handfuls once drank whole nations now slake their thirst. The Jewish is now Catholic; the religion of the Hebrew has become the religion of humanity; and this is the essential character of Christianity—it is a religion not for a *coterie*, nor a sect, nor a church, nor a party; and he that tries to limit it to his own is sure to lose half its life and power. What land has it not visited, what colour and clime has it not touched and transformed! Tongues have ceased, tribes have withered down to the roots. Priests have passed away without a word to declare that they once were; temples, and *basilicas*, and cathedrals, and pyramids are in ruins; but this divine Levite still walks the world, consecrating every spot it touches; this angel with the everlasting Gospel still flies with a pinion, that neither faints under equatorial suns, nor is numbed amid polar snows, while his strength is renewed as he flies. The whole earth shall yet be covered with God's glory, and a mighty multitude shall stand on it before the throne, that no man can number. But not only has the Jewish ceased in reference to Christianity, but families, whole families, have been introduced into it. "Of all nations," it is said, "and of all kindreds," that is, families. Shem, Ham, and Japheth once met in the ark of Noah; they meet in their descendants in the ark of everlasting happiness, and holiness, and peace. The African is just as welcome to the Gospel, ay, and as fit for it, as the most polished and educated European. Nothing can be more monstrous than the notion that the African is a sort of intermediate being between the human animal, as they talk, and the brutes that perish; and that the negro is not capable of the cultivation, the elevation, that we have. No doubt the bodies of the human race vary, just as everything else does. The houses in this great city differ very much from each other: one is built of stone, and all the wealth of a bank

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is lavished upon its ornament; another is a very humble cottage; but in the humblest cottage and in the noblest hall the inhabitant is a man. So the body of the European may be more beautifully chiselled, the symmetry more exquisite, its adaptation to the inhabitant more complete; but in the humblest specimen of physical organization in Africa, and in the highest specimen of physical organization in England, there subsists living and latent an immortal and a glorious soul. The outer shrine may differ; the inner glory is the same. The Gospel is addressed to all; and therefore we read that in the group that composes the church in glory are all kindreds; Shem, and Ham, and Japheth; the patriarch from his tent, the Jew from his temple, the Greek and the Roman from their civilization, the Arab from his desert, the Cossack from his steppes—all, of every kindred, each retaining his original idiosyncracy, but all elevated, inspired, ennobled by the grace of God and the influence of the resurrection-morn. The church of the future will not be composed wholly of white people, nor wholly of black people; I do not believe that Adam was either the white of England or the black of Africa; probably he was more like the Arab, or the Syrian. But whatever be the perfection of the human frame it will be there; and when the resurrection power passes on us there will not be new bodies given to us, but the old bodies inspired, elevated, reconstructed, endued with immortality and lighted up with glory. And not only will there be all kindreds in this group, but there will also be all tongues; "a great multitude of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues."

In that future there will not be one universal tongue. This is the crotchet of Rome, not the revelation of God. Language is the vehicle of thought, the mere clothing of things; and the variety of speech, instead of being a blemish, seems really the greatest possible beauty. All flowers have the same essential constituent elements; but how different is the camellia from the rose, the daisy, or the lily! God has made infinite variety of development upon the ground of an essential

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and an all-pervading unity. In the same manner, the highest music is not composed of one part, but of four. The purest light is composed of three or of seven colours; and thus the harmony of heaven may not be mere unison, or each inmate the mere copy of another; there may be infinite variety, and yet an all-pervading unity. But was not the division of tongues the result of sin? It was; the division of tongues at Babel was the effect of sin. The result of the most elaborate investigation into the ethnology of our world and the structure of its tongues by Germans, French, and English, yields the unanimous conclusion that all languages indicate affinities enough to prove a common source, but variety enough to imply a grand disruption at some period of their history. In other words, the investigations of science have reached the assertion of the Word of God, that the tower of Babel is not a myth, a romance, but a simple and a truthful history. But it is objected, if the division of tongues arose from sin, would it not follow that what sin has done shall be annihilated, and what was once spoken in Paradise shall be the language of heaven? I answer, the highest triumph of grace is not in bringing back what was originally in Paradise, but in taking what sin has done and turning that to the greater glory of God, and the richer manifestation of his goodness. So that while the different tongues that now exist may spring from sin, grace can take the variety that sin has made, and instead of allowing that variety to subserve the purpose of Satan, may make it subserve only more resplendently the purpose and beneficence of God. As a proof of this, Pentecost was not the selection of one tongue for all nations, but the consecration of each man's own tongue to convey the wonderful works and ways of God. Thus we expect in that group will be all tongues, purified and disinfected from the taint of their passage through this world, and made together to express the glory and to be the vehicles of the praise of him who made all things by his power, redeemed all in

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his mercy, and out of the intensest evil has educed everlasting and glorious good.

Such is the constituent character of the group. They stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb. This shows the change that has passed upon them. They are standing in the immediate presence of God. When John saw the glory of God, we are told in the Apocalypse, "I fell down at his feet as dead." In this earthly tenement he was not able to endure the intense glory of God. But these not only endure but enjoy it. It is the very sight they love, it is the very air they breathe; they are like him because they see him as he is; the promise being, "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." They are evidences of the fulfilment of Christ's prayer: "I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may be where I am, that they may behold my glory." They stand before the throne in that light which no man now can see or has seen.

Their attitude is remarkable; they *stand*. The word *stand* is used in the Psalms to denote acceptance. "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment." "If thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, O Lord, who could stand?" But this group have ceased to feel that impossibility; "they stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb." All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions put away, their hearts are sanctified, their nature pure; and they can now bear to be seen in that intense light which reveals specks in the sun, flaws in the angels, faults in all. And they stand too, we are told, before the Lamb. This is to remind us that it is through him they got there, and that it is by him they stand there;—he is the centre to which as *radii* they converge; his name, his praise, what he gained by his cross and what he does by his crown, constituting the burden of the richest songs, the study of their inquiring minds, and the admiration of all that are there. Or perhaps the word *stand* may denote, they are ready to execute his will, prepared constantly to do service to him; as servants stand in the presence of a king to go

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forth and execute his behests in every province of his wide-spread empire.

These are not the robes of primal innocence; they were lost in Paradise, and are now mingled with the corruption of all things. Not the robes that Adam bequeathed to them after he fell; for they are unfit for us to appear in before the presence of God and of the Lamb. Then what robes are these? Robes they have washed, in the language of the same chapter, and made white in the blood of the Lamb. It is their outer aspect, and therefore the declaration of their only title of admission into heaven. Christ took our tainted robes upon him and bequeathed his spotless robes to us. He was made our sin that we might never taste its bitter penalty; we are made his righteousness that we may for ever enjoy his everlasting glory. In Christ is our title, justified by him we have the ground of our acceptance. Those white robes are not their own, they are imputed; and they reflect for ever the glory of him that imputed them. This is the only title of admission; and, blessed be God! it is a title freely offered to all. The guest that went in without it was speechless; he had no apology, or excuse. Why? Because it was freely offered to him, just as it was offered to every guest that was there. And if any one appear at the judgment-seat, at the gates of glory, without the shining robe, the resplendent title, it will not be because God's decree excluded him, but because he refused to put it on, and thought his own raiment was good enough to wear in the presence of God.

But not only are they clad in white robes, but they have also palms in their hands. In the calendar of the Church of Rome is a day called Palm Sunday; and on this day accordingly palm-branches are carried in their cathedrals, and are duly blessed amid pomp and splendour in the presence of the people; that Church, ever true to its character, holding fast the dead symbol, whilst the inner life of which it was the exponent is gone and perished for ever. But the palms held in the hands of this palm-bearing multitude are not insignifi-

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cant and unsuggestive things, but full of meaning. A conqueror in ancient times was received on returning from the battle, carrying in his hand a palm-branch. The inscriptions on monuments prove this; the constant allusions to it in sacred and profane writers equally prove it; and the fact therefore that this group has each a palm in his hand denotes they are conquerors, and have passed successfully through all the perils and the trials of a protracted warfare. Here we are soldiers, our condition is that of warfare; but our hope is victory; the symbol of it is the palm in the hand of him that is clad with the white and the shining robe. In this world there is war. This is not the region of peace, it is not the realm of conquest, it is the season of battle, the fiercer that it is inner and not outer. There are wars more dreadful than those which time has witnessed —the war described in the New Testament is with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Far sterner battles have been waged in individual bosoms than ever have been fought and finished on historic battle-fields. Many a one who could lead his victorious troops to victory never learned, or rather never was able, to conquer himself. The greatest conqueror in the sight of heaven is not he whose name is registered in the annals, and inscribed on the monuments, of grateful nations, but he that conquers the evil that is within in the strength of Him who is offered to the poorest, and whose strength is equal to the wants of the weakest. What is this warfare, and what is its nature? It is a warfare with Satan. Many think Satan a figure of speech; and, alas! they that think so have received instruction from the very Satan whose personality and existence they thus explain away. But there is no doubt that there is an archangel fallen, possessed of all the subtlety of the serpent, all the ferocity of the lion; a being so sunk and fallen, that our ruin is his only delight, our destruction his only trade; and the incidental gleams of joy that pass athwart his countenance or that electrify his spirit rise from the success he attains in ruining and destroying souls. I

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know not a more awful proof of Satan's power, than that he can penetrate the depths of the heart, speak to the conscience, persuade without words, enchain without iron links, and drag a captive at his chariot-wheels, the very man that boasts he is free, and never was the slave of any. When we shall take our place in that shining group and gaze at the palm in our hand, the symbol of a warfare that has ceased, and the evidence of a conquest that has been won, we shall be so persuaded of Satan's power and Satan's might that we shall learn then, as we never learned before, that nothing but a Divine power within us could have made us conquerors, nothing but Almighty strength made perfect in our weakness could ever have brought us here. But there is another element that we have to war with, the world. Perhaps the world is not properly an enemy, but rather a weapon wielded and used in Satan's hand. It comes to you offering to-day a place, if you will only give up your principle; another day it offers you honour, if you will only resist that other thing called conscience; another time it offers you wealth, if you will only shrink from duty. The world's smiles are far more perilous than the world's hatred, persecution, and reproach; and never are we more deceived than when we are the most pleased, and give the largest hospitality to the smiles, the promises, and the flatteries of the world. We all know that, so long as we have five senses, what gratifies them will have prodigious power with us. But has not God left much to gratify them within limits that are holy? It is only when these limits are exceeded that the world has gained the battle and that we have disastrously lost it. Another foe we have to encounter, if indeed a distinct foe it can be called, is sin; and the worst of it is that it is everywhere. Sin is in the head, in the heart, in the conscience, in the hand; it is in every nerve, and fibre, and muscle of our physical economy. And this sin, ever present, a lodger that we do not like, and that many dare not eject—a power that we submit to be led captive by oftener than we resist and endeavour to expel—the palm-bearing multi-

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tude have found not only expiated by a Saviour's blood, but extirpated from their hearts by a Saviour's Spirit; and the palm in the hand is the proof that they are fit for heaven, the white robe that they wear is the proof that they are entitled to heaven; and thus having the right to be there, and the qualification that makes their being there enjoyment, they constitute the great multitude that no man can number, the company of the redeemed out of every kindred, and people, and nation, and tongue, who have overcome through the blood of the Lamb, and are now before the throne, and serve him day and night without ceasing. Their battles are now over, their warfare is accomplished; they have fought the good fight, they have reached the prize; the battle-field is left far behind, the shield is needed no more; the sword is not beat into the ploughshare, but it is transmuted into the palm, and they neither learn nor love war any more.

The last feature in their character is that they sing, "Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." Now if this be the model church, of which every church upon earth ought to be in some degree a copy, how truly evangelical is every *trait* in its character! how truly evangelical is the very song they sing! Not "salvation unto us," as if we had reached it by our own power; but "salvation unto our God and to the Lamb." When a church on earth speaks much of itself it is an ominous feature; when it speaks entirely of itself it is a thorough apostacy. This group in heaven say nothing of what they did; the burden of their song is, "Salvation unto our God and to the Lamb;" that is, his be all the glory, ours all the comfort. "Salvation unto our God," he only is the author of it; "and unto the Lamb," he only is the purchaser of it; and to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit alone be all the glory, the honour, and the praise. I do not say that the salvation here spoken of is the only study in heaven. I do not believe that the study of the Gospel will be the only study there. All creation is full of exquisitely beautiful and suggestive thoughts that give glory to God

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and to the Lamb. But certainly the burden of every song, the key-note of the richest anthems, will be salvation. They will see earth in its light, themselves in its lustre, and all things radiant with the glory of him who redeemed them by his blood, and made them kings and priests unto our God and his Christ.

They sing but one song. Many nations, many kindreds, many tongues are there, but only one song is heard. Why? Because its key-note is one, because its object, its glorious object is one. The "Hosannah" of ancient Israel is translated into the "Hallelujah" of the church that is in glory; and as all look to one blessed Saviour, and all honour one God, and feel indebted to him for all they are and have for ever and ever, they sing with that harmony which none can disturb, that unity which no difference can injure. And, lastly, it is said they sing it with a loud voice. There are no cold hearts in heaven; every one in that group is in earnest. Their hearts are loaded with the recollections of a thousand blessings; and therefore earnestly, intensely, from the very heart they sing, "Salvation unto our God and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The tribes numbered by Moses and Aaron have all passed away; nor should we desire a place in those once illustrious catalogues that have now ceased to have a place in the archives of the history of our world. But there is a book in which our name ought to be; there is a catalogue from which to be wanting is the most awful calamity that man can experience. Is our name, not in the register of Moses, but in the Lamb's book of life? Is it written there in the sparkling light of heaven? Have you any reason to believe from anything you are, external or internal, objective or subjective, that you are a child of God, an heir of Christ; and that there is a niche in that temple, a seat in that palace, a harp in that choir for you as an expectant of heaven, an heir of God and of Christ Jesus? One marvels how men whose days are a hand-breadth, whose existence is so precarious, who are crushed before the moth, and when crushed do not cease to live, but only

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cease to live in this world,—standing on an isthmus wasted by the waves of every year, and washed by the rolling inward billows of eternity,—how men standing in such a position refuse to look into the future, or to ask, What am I? Whither am I going? Is there any reason to hope that I shall form one of the holy and happy group that is above? This world is not our home, it is a mere middle passage; it is the desert march of pilgrims looking for the joyous home of saints that are about the throne. You have not to do something in order to be destroyed; you have to lay hold on something to save you. Most people think they never can be lost except they do some monstrous crime. The fact is, you are lost by birth, lost by nature; and to be saved you must undergo a grand process, lay hold upon a great Saviour; and only through his blood, and by his Spirit sanctifying you, can you hope to be clad in those white robes and to carry those palm-boughs of victory and of triumph. The vast importance of the present moment is this—that every Sunday as it passes you have taken a step in one direction or the other. Every Sunday you have advanced a portion of your march to heaven or to hell. There is no neutral, insulated person on earth. There is no one occupying a position from which he can say, I have neither gone backwards nor forwards; but, sure as the heart beats, so sure the feet are travelling either to heaven or to hell. The vast importance of the present moment is this, that we are now sowing broad-cast upon the earth seeds that will grow up into harvests of everlasting misery or harvests of everlasting joy. We are now candidates for eternity, we are building for happiness or woe. Whilst I speak and write, and you read or hear, time is fast rushing away. The clock of St. Paul's Cathedral does not strike any one hour within hearing of the same people in whose hearing it struck the last hour. Two or three that heard it strike eleven never hear it strike twelve; two or three that hear it strike twelve will not hear it strike one. There is a ceaseless funeral march, a continuous procession of souls to the judgment-seat;

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and if our eyes were opened we should see the whole air peopled with souls rushing to the judgment; and if our ears were unstopped we could hear the trumpet of judgment summoning every moment to the great throne. Time passes; the morning comes like a bride, the evening departs softly and sweetly like a benediction, reminding us to ask, Are we saved or are we not? Let not ours be that awful recollection, "The summer is past, the harvest is ended, and we are not saved." Do we belong to that group? Am I sure of it? The possibility that we may be, should remind us to breathe to Him the prayer that occurs in the ancient Te Deum: "Number us with thy saints in glory everlasting;" incorporate us with this happy family; make us stones of this no mean city. Heaven is not a solitary place, a hermitage, a conventual cell, where each is insulated from the other in loneliness. All the imagery employed denotes that our future state is a social condition: it is a city, it is a country, it is the general assembly of the church of the first-born. Christianity does not destroy our social feelings, it consecrates them. Jesus, who had so many souls to save, had a friend in Lazarus, and intimate friends in Martha and Mary. And those friendships which have been reciprocated below will not be destroyed, but purified and consecrated for ever. The future is the scene of perfect knowledge. If I am in that shining group, shall I be there and not know my next neighbour? Shall I be in heaven and not know him that stands beside me? Will Moses fail to recognize Aaron? will Abraham fail to recognize his beloved Sarah or Isaac? Will the Patriarchs not know their sons? Will heaven be a place where all those thrilling and beautiful recollections have perished for ever in the bosom of the saved? Has the wave of oblivion washed out every trace that was there? No, no; but memory, or rather the heart more than the memory, will not consent to let its imagery fade out till the grand originals appear. The light of truth shall fill every mind, and a sea of love shall overflow with its spring-tide every heart. The glass shall

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be broken, the veil shall be rent; heaven is a home; its inhabitants are brothers and sisters. It is a day without a night, a sky without a cloud, and a sun without a setting. "Oh that I had wings," may many say, "like a dove, that I might be there and be at rest!" It will not be the extinction of what we are, but the inspiration, consecration, ennobling of all that we are. God made us at the first; what sin has done will be expunged, but what God made will be restored, reconstructed, and beautified. It is the scene of true unity. There is no united church here below; but there the church is one. I do not expect that in this world there will be perfect unity, as there is no such thing as perfect love, perfect holiness, perfect peace, perfect happiness. There will be differences upon earth; let us differ in good temper and in Christian feeling. But there all these differences are covered with the spring-tide of everlasting light, and love, and truth. That multitude is not composed of natives. In that shining group there is not one native of heaven. They are all colonists, all immigrants; they were on earth what we are now; they came out of tribulation, out of great perils, out of poverty, and sickness, and sorrow. If they got there, why may not I? The road that they beat smooth by their feet is accessible to us; the bosom of the same Father is open to us; the same happy home opens its everlasting gates and countless mansions to all believers.

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LECTURE XXX.

ARISE, SHINE, THY LIGHT IS COME.

We have arrived at a very imperfect apprehension of the effect produced when the prophecy of Isaiah becomes history.

"*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. The Lord shall be thine everlasting light.*"—Isaiah lx. 1.

The shechinah will possess a glory far eclipsing the glory of the stars; from between the cherubim will radiate a glory that will make pale a thousand suns; and that new light will reveal objects and disclose hues which to us are quite imperceptible in the light that now is.

In that shining light we shall see all beautiful things with far greater intensity. The light which now discloses to us the tints and colours of flowers, the beauties and splendour of the stars, of gems, and of the rainbow, shall die; but the perfect light, which is to supersede it, will reveal all these things in intenser brilliancy, displaying beauties which we have not seen—hidden splendours, as yet concealed or disguised. We shall then find that this earth, the workmanship of God, has beauty and glory and magnificence within it, which eye hath not yet seen, nor man's heart ever yet conceived. In that pure light all the discoveries hitherto made by science will appear as nothing when compared with the disclosures that will then come in waves of glory within the horizon. Mines of interesting thought, stores of rich and varied treasures will be laid bare, and exquisite harmonies, now silent, will evolve from creation. We shall find that all that science and research have yet done is to bring us to the margin of the mighty

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ocean of mystery and beauty, whose contents and treasures remain to be fully and clearly comprehended. Then the tree of knowledge will no longer be separated from the tree of life; both shall own the same root and blossom on the same soil. The light which is to be will also reveal what the light which now is cannot do. The light of our sun reveals to us colour—material colour and material shapes, but nothing more. The light that is to supersede it will reveal not only these, but also moral and spiritual character; showing us that holiness is essential beauty, the highest purity the greatest brightness. It will unveil to us a glory in holy character far surpassing that possessed by sun, moon, or stars; by flower, fruit, and all things beautiful on earth. We shall then see that the purest beauty in this world is but a dim exponent of that excelling moral beauty to be disclosed in the New Jerusalem. But this new and glorious light will also cast its rays over all the history of the past, and will emphatically fulfil the words of our Lord: "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." At present much of our life is involved in mystery; many things happen to us, the meaning of which we cannot comprehend! That dark and freezing cloud, which now casts its shadow on your heart, and which you cannot understand, has its mission, and the new light will disclose it. That stroke which smote down your first-born and fairest, has a meaning and an issue, though you could not then understand it; and that blow which you cannot think of now without shedding tears of bitterness, will then be seen to have been but the touch of a Father who loved —a stroke inflicted by the hand that was nailed to the cross for you. That labyrinth, now inexplicable —that mystery now unfathomable—those dealings of Providence which you cannot now comprehend, will then be seen distinctly to have had an aim and a beneficence which shall awaken in you new songs of gratitude, and inspire you with deeper thankfulness to Him who led you all the way through the wilderness, and placed you there. Then shall you see all things to have

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been working together for your good, and that the darkest cloud had ever a smiling face behind it, and that the bitterest cup had in it a secret sweet. The great chain of mystery will be then lifted above the stream; every link will be luminous, and you will be convinced in glory of what you so much doubt or disbelieve on earth, viz., that you received not one stripe too many, endured not one pang too severe, were not subjected to one visitation that was not as essential to your ultimate happiness as that Christ should have died on the cross, and washed you with his own precious blood. This glorious light will not only diffuse splendour over the past, but it will place us in a position for solving mysteries, and elucidating truths, which we cannot now comprehend. For instance, we often dispute about the harmony that subsists, or ought to subsist, between predestination, or election, and the doctrine of free-will. We read plainly that we are chosen before the foundation of the world; we read as plainly—"Why will ye not come unto me: why will ye die?" We are satisfied from the one passage of the sovereignty of God; from the other, of the freedom of the human will, as well as our responsibility. We are staggered, and cannot reconcile them; they appear to us altogether discordant. But, amid the light that shines in the New Jerusalem, both will be seen to be not only great truths, but the one shall be shown to be in perfect harmony with the other. Take another truth: salvation by grace, and yet the necessity for good works. We cannot comprehend *now* how good works should have nothing to do with salvation, and yet that we should be called upon to be fruitful in every good work. We shall *then* see that the two are essentially connected; that the one is as indispensable as the other. Now we see truths only in fragments; then we shall see them as a complete whole and in full. Now to us truth seems an apocrypha; then it will be an apocalypse. *Now* we see the greatest truths surrounded by the greatest mysteries, as the loftiest mountains ever cast around them the broadest shadows; *then* the sun will be vertical, and no truth

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shall have a shadow. All things that we now see "through a glass darkly," shall then be seen "face to face;" everything will be luminous in the New Jerusalem. The sovereign purposes of God, which neither you nor I can grasp now, we shall comprehend in some degree then; the Trinity we shall then in some degree unravel; and, although it must for ever continue to be a truth above us, it will be infinitely more luminous and transparent then than it is now. The atonement, the incarnation, the necessity for the death of our Saviour, the introduction of evil, the influence of the Holy Spirit—these are all truths which are more or less wrapped in mystery now; but they shall all be robed in clearest light then; and in that clearest light all things shall be seen clearly. We shall then see that in this light will be fulfilled all the glorious promises which God has made. For instance, our Lord says himself, "I am the light of the world." He is so now really, but not universally; then he shall be so universally; then shall be fulfilled that beautiful promise made in Isaiah: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee; and his glory shall be seen upon thee; and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Then shall be fulfilled that promise: "To you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in his wings." Then that light which sparkled in types and glowed in promises—which appeared in the cradle at Bethlehem—which shone on the cross, and illuminated the grave, shall no longer be restricted to any particular nook, portion, or region of the globe, but shall overspread and overflow with its radiant splendour the whole habitable world; and there shall break upon the view a scene such as man in his happiest imaginings has never yet dreamt of: then shall be shown in that light the true unity of the church of Christ. It shall then be seen to be not what sectarians have called it, nor what exclusionists pronounced it. It

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shall be seen to be not a material uniformity—not a ceremonial identity—but a great and hallowed likeness of each to each, and all to Christ: all being one in Christ, and, therefore, one with each other. Then shall we recognize each other as we are. In the light which now is, we can see each other's countenances, and judge each other's actions, although we often misinterpret and misapprehend them; but in that light, I believe, hearts shall be visible, affections luminous, and character shall show, and write, and record itself; and we shall know not each other's countenances only, but each other's thoughts and hearts even as we know ourselves. In that glory all creation shall be made glad; there shall be no plaintive tone amid all its sounds; no sob for the dead shall there break upon the ear; all earth shall be paradise, all voices shall be jubilee, and, basking in a sunshine without cloud, and on an earth without decay, the world shall close, as the world commenced, with paradise. But we shall see in that glory, what we *now* ought to feel more—the preciousness of man's soul. "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" How few of us feel this weighty truth as we ought to feel it! The part that is "myself"—the part that lives for ever—is not what the eye can see, or the hand touch. That part of our being, whose happiness we ought to study as our supreme object and primary aim, is the immortally precious soul, and yet it is now the least valued of all. That which ministers to its safety is least appreciated *now*, but *then* we shall see that one soul in glory far transcends a thousand stars, and outweighs, in its magnificence and preciousness, ten thousand worlds. *Then* we shall see that text luminous to a degree we never saw before: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" And then we shall know it—not by the soul's everlasting loss, but by its everlasting gain. This light, which shall make so many things plain, is a light that will be still mediatorial—for the text is remarkable: "The

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Lord God shall lighten it, and the *Lamb* shall be the light thereof." The literal translation is, "The Lord God shall lighten it, and the Lamb shall be the *lamp* thereof;" meaning that Christ is the medium of transmission for all the light which illumines the New Jerusalem. And he *alone* shall be that medium. Ministers, sacraments, and ordinances, are the lights *now*, but these shall all be swept away: all stars shall be merged into the bright Morning Star; all suns into the Sun of Righteousness. Christ shall literally be "the all in all,"—the medium through which all light comes from God to us, and by which all praise rises from us to the ear of God, for ever and ever. In one brief sentence:—The light that shall then illuminate the New Jerusalem, shall be moral and spiritual light—the perfection of the light that now is; and in that new and more glorious light, we shall see what is mystery to us now, and see more clearly things but dimly revealed to us now. Let me ask, therefore, in concluding my remarks upon this passage—Are you the children of the light? Are you walking in the light? Are you transformed by the light into the likeness of God? Is your heart in heaven? Does your imagination ever unfold its wings, and visit that blessed and glorious scene, and evoke in your heart the aspiration of the Psalmist of old: "Oh! that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest?" Does the contemplation induce you to set your heart, not on things that are seen, but on those which are unseen? Do you feel that all on earth upon which men trust is passing away? Do you not, from the spectacle of the overthrow of dynasties, the downfall of thrones, the tremblings and convulsive throes of the nations—in a word, from the shaking and uncertainty of all that is around you, learn to lay hold upon things that will and must last for ever? The true way, I believe, to dislodge wrong principles and preferences, is to try to implant sound ones; we shall never sit loose to this world by being told that it is bad, or raise our affections above it by being told that it is unworthy of them. The proper way to dislodge the love of the

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world that now is, is to unfold and press upon our apprehension the glories of the world that will be. And just as the sun at noonday shining upon the grate puts out the fire, and just as the sun at day-dawn shining in the sky puts out the stars, so the splendour, and beauty, and magnificence of the heavenly Jerusalem will make so poor and dim all the glories of the world that now is, that kings shall look on their crowns as pale, and worthless, and see beauty nowhere but in a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Do you, dear brethren, endeavour not only to rest your affections upon that better and brighter scene, but do you endeavour to make it known also to others? If we are living in the light ourselves, we shall try to illuminate others. In proportion as a man is a Christian, in the same proportion is he a missionary. The intensest light casts its rays the farthest; we are made Christians that we may feel as stewards and trustees; we receive the unction of the saint that we may engage in the duties, and undertake the responsibilities of the servant. Depend upon it, that just in proportion as a man is illuminated with the heavenly light himself, in the same proportion will he lighten others. The intensest luminary spreads its rays the farthest; the greatest Christian is always the greatest missionary. He who is the greatest receiver of light from God, will be the greatest reflector of that light amongst his fellow-men.

Are we in the number of those who alone shall see and enter the New Jerusalem? Are we among "the pure in heart," for they alone shall see God? Are we holy men, with new hearts, touched, and thereby transformed, by the Spirit of God? Speculations about prophecy will not serve us. Satan knows more about the Apocalypse than all the commentators from the Christian era to this day. It is not an increase of intellectual light, so much as it is a need of an increase of that new, transforming, illuminating, sanctifying light, which comes from the Sun of Righteousness, that we require. "Except a man be born again (we are told) he cannot see the kingdom of God." And, my dear

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friends, it is not difficult to ascertain if you are destined to become citizens of the New Jerusalem. Let me ask you what interest you feel in those foretastes of it to be had here below? If the millennium be a Sabbath of a thousand years, they only to whom the sabbaths on earth are sweet will be fitted for its enjoyments and employments. What, then, let me ask, is the Sabbath to you? Is it the sweetest day of the seven? Can you part with any day, but not with the Sabbath? When you are ill, do you take a day from Cæsar, or from Christ, for the use of the means of recovery? Let me ask, what day of the week comes round to you with the greatest delight, and occasions you the greatest happiness? Do you love the house of God? If the New Jerusalem is to be a city of perpetual song, thanksgiving, and praise—if there will be perpetual progress there in the knowledge of God, of Christ, and of all things holy, and of all things mysterious—do you now love the study of such themes, do you love the Bible which unveils them to you? Do you prefer a day in God's house to a thousand within the gates of sin? What is the house of God to you?—a happy place, whither you come with a glad and thankful heart, or a place in which to perform a melancholy duty to pacify your conscience, or rather to do penance in atonement for sin, than to partake of those spiritual pleasures and employments which God has vouchsafed in it? If you love the Sabbath in this world which passeth away you will love the eternal Sabbath which will succeed the six thousand years of this world that are now drawing to a close. I believe that these six thousand years, according to the most ancient and best calculation, are very near their accomplishment. I believe that we are at the opening of the pouring out of the seventh vial, and at the commencement of scenes which will not last very long, but which shall be tempestuous and stormy beyond all parallel; the din, discord, and confusion of which, however, shall be like the preparation of the instruments of a great concert for the harmony and jubilee that will prevail over all the earth. And if this be so, let us set

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our hearts on things above, let us sit loose to this world, let us so pass through the things that are seen and temporal, that we may direct our attention mainly to the things which are unseen and eternal. I need not remind you that many of the things to which we looked forward, as predicted, have actually taken place. Since the seventh vial began to be poured out, the whole continent of Europe has been convulsed, shattered, and torn. Babylon has come into remembrance before God, and her judgments descend upon her. Momentous events have taken place since 1848, and it is now not improbable that the usurped spiritual dominion of Babylon will also soon be broken up; and when it is broken up, the Jews will march to the land of their fathers; and God's ancient chosen people will be invested with noble honours, and dignities, when they become visible members of the visible church of the living God. These are events we anticipate with joy. They are the burden of a thousand prophecies—the aspiration of many hearts—the hope of the universal church.

We are upon the eve of a grand response. The spreading anarchy of nations is opening up a clearer and nearer view of that city whose gates are praise, and its walls salvation. It will soon emerge from the chaos in all its predicted beauty—the envy of those that are without, the admiration of those that are within —the rosy eve of departing time—the auspicious twilight of opening eternity.

The New Jerusalem shall be the great metropolis of the earth, reposing in the light and beauty of an unsetting sun, and the crowns and sceptres, and thrones of innumerable kings, reflecting the rays of the shechinah, shall give the glory of all they are to Him, whose are their thrones, and for whom they rule. Laws shall then be leaves from the tree of life, love shall be the secret and the source of allegiance, and perfect liberty and light the possession and the enjoyment of all.

The whole earth shall be filled with the glory of God, and its humblest and its highest tenantry shall follow no longer the fitful flashes of human passion, or the

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meteor-lights of ill-regulated fancy, or the guesses at truth of wavering reason, or the dim lights of patristic or ecclesiastical tradition, but the pure and perfect guidance of the Lamb. Every province of nature, every path of the saved, every work of Providence, or product of grace, shall reflect the glory of God, and each inmate of that sacred and sublime metropolis shall walk, *i. e.*, make progress in the light of it, rising evermore on untiring wing to loftier heights of knowledge, and drinking ever fresh and ever multiplying delight from every new Apocalypse of the glories and perfections of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords.

The kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it. So it was predicted, many hundred years before John, in Isa. lx. 11: "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. The glory of Lebanon shall come to thee, the fir-tree, the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious." Again, it is written: "The sons of strangers shall build up the walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee;" and again: "All they from Sheba shall come, they shall bring gold and incense;" and again it is written: "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings." In Ps. lxxii. it is also written: "The kings of Tarshish and the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all things shall fall down before him, and all nations shall serve him." And in 1 Kings x. 24, we have a typical picture of the splendour of the true Solomon, the king of peace: "And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules. And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore-trees that are in the vale,

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for abundance." This prediction of kings consecrating their glory in the millennial age may refer to those who are now kings; that is, who are so previous to the millennium, and who shall then bring what is their present glory and honour into it. Some such reference seems to be indicated in 1 Cor. xv. 24: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." We must, of course, understand by the expression, "they shall bring their glory and honour into it"—not any earthly royalty, adding one ray to the splendour, or one atom to the magnificence of the New Jerusalem, for this is impossible. They derive all their glory from it, and can add none to it. But in the same way as we give glory and honour to God, by acknowledging all we have to be the borrowed reflection of his beneficence, and to be devoted to him as its legitimate and proper use; so these kings and nations shall see all they are and possess in the light of the New Jerusalem, and shall trace on every honour, and blessing, and power, with which they have been endowed, the superscription of the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, and lift up to him alone ceaseless praise, as the author, and owner, and sovereign bestower of all. They will sing in their songs: "These crowns which we wear derive all their lustre, and these sceptres which we wield their sway, and these thrones on which we sit their strength and stability, from thee, who art the Prince of the kings of the earth. These flowers receive from thee their existence, their fragrance from thy breath, and their tints from thy smiles: and these gems are beautiful because thou lookest on them, and this scene is so glorious because thou art in it." All above, around, below, will be luminous with the light of the Lamb. These redeemed ones will sing with new voices David's song, in 1 Chron. xxix. 10: "Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel our father, for ever and

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ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name."

"There shall be no night there:" as the millennium will be the sabbath of the earth, it will be followed by no night. By referring to Genesis, we find these words at the close of the account of the creation of each day: "And the evening and the morning were the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth day." But in the account of the creation of the seventh day, it is not added at the close, "The evening and the morning were the seventh day." As if the seventh day were to be the complete type of the seventh millenary, and that millenary to merge without an intervening night into everlasting noon. The negation, "no night," seems at first view a flaw, for, when we are weary and exhausted with the fatigues of the week-day work, we hail the approach of the shadows of even, as the precursor of repose and refreshing sleep. "No night," now, would be to us all the exhaustion of energy, and health, and life; but a little reflection will show us that what would be a calamity in our present imperfect state will be one of the greatest blessings of that new and glorious condition of which we have at present but a dim and distant prospect.

The resurrection body shall be capable of action without exhaustion, and of labour without fatigue; we shall run and not be weary, we shall walk and not faint. Corrupt, it is raised incorruptible; mortal, it is raised immortal. The spirit shall be willing, while the flesh shall not be weak; our bodies shall be wings, not weights to the soul, and the mind itself, retuned and restored, shall pursue its excursions into realms of beauty and of glory on untiring pinion, and with

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purged eye; reason will not weary in its pursuits, nor imagination in its excursions, nor the heart in its throbbings: "they *rest not*" (and yet they rest) "day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!"

We shall know in whole, and not in part. The glass through which we now see darkly shall be broken: there shall be no cold shadow from above, nor mist or exhalation from below; our eyes shall be brighter, our whole soul readjusted; all controversies shall be settled; there will be no dim medium, nor second-hand knowledge; we shall have strength to look and patience to learn each scene and wonder that each successive hour brings within the horizon of our view. The Sun of righteousness shall no longer be horizontal, casting broad shadows, but vertical, and creating none. Our horizon shall widen as we live; past providence, with its ups and downs, and labyrinthine turnings, shall be fully revealed to us; and redemption with its glories and its wonders shall spread all luminous before us, with scarcely one undeciphered mystery or unexplained hieroglyph.

We shall no longer see through a glass darkly. Those objects which it requires the microscope to make visible in our present state of imperfection and weakness will then come clearly into our view, and thus wonders, mysteries, and traces of wisdom, benevolence, and power, which are at present veiled from our eyes, shall then become luminous and visible; and in these unseen and unsounded depths—the mere surface of which the most powerful microscopes have revealed—we shall see such proofs of design, so distinct footprints of Deity, such marvels, that we shall feel that the sometimes alleged want of evidence of the existence of God was owing not to any deficiency in reality, but to our ignorance, and weakness, and prejudice, and passions. In what we now see of the minute, there is overwhelming proof of the fact and presence of Deity. In what we shall see when there will be no night, that evidence will be glorious beyond conception.

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Nor will the telescope reveal less impressive proofs of the power, and greatness, and resources of Deity. Of these we have at present no weak conception; and the loftier the height to which the latest telescope carries our vision, the more numerous and magnificent are the disclosures of the greatness of God. "The undevout astronomer is mad," is a line that has passed into an axiom, and is universally admitted to be so. If this be true of the astronomer on earth, how impossible will all undevoutness be when his observatory shall be the walls of the New Jerusalem, and the light in which all things shine, the glory of God and of the Lamb; and the eye that looks as free from speck as is the heart from passion and the mind from prejudice!

All creation will then lie in the light of revelation, and texts of Scripture, and facts of nature, glorify together "the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." The original harmony between God's two great oracles, suspended and interrupted by sin, shall be restored, and all things, made fearfully and wonderfully at first, and all truths inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, shall reveal their common birth, and accomplish their intended mission.

In the words of a living divine: "And although it be true, that night now discloses to us the wonders of the universe, so that to take from us darkness were to take the revelation of the magnificence of the creation, whence comes this but from the imperfection of faculties —faculties which only enable us to discern certain bodies, and under certain circumstances, and which probably suffer far more to escape them than they bring to our notice? We speak of the powers of vision; and very amazing they are—giving us a kind of empire over the vast panorama, so that we gather in its beauties, and compel them, as though by enchantment, to paint themselves in miniature through the tiny lenses of the eye; but, nevertheless, how feeble are they! Bodies of less than a certain magnitude evade them. The microscope must be called in, though this only carries the vision one or two degrees further; whilst other bodies, ethereal,

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for example, or those which move with extraordinary velocity, are either altogether invisible or only partially discerned. And is it not on account of this feebleness of power that the eye seeks the shadows of night before it can survey the majestic troop of stars? That troop is on its everlasting march, as well when the sun is high in the firmament as when he has gone down amid the clouds of the west; and it is only because the eye has not strength to discern the less brilliant bodies in the presence of the great luminary of the heavens that it must wait for night to disclose to it the peopled sea of immensity. I glory, then, once more, in the predicted absence of night. Be it so, that night is now our instructor, and that a world of perpetual sunshine would be a world of gross ignorance; I feel that night is to cease because we shall no longer need to be taught, because we shall be able to observe the universe illuminated, and not require as now to have it darkened for our gaze. It is like telling me of surprising increase of power; I shall not need night as a season for repose; I shall not need night as a medium of instruction; I shall be adapted in every faculty to an everlasting day—a day whose lustre shall not obscure the palest star, and yet shall paint the smallest flower, and throughout whose perpetual shining I shall have the universe laid open to me in its every section, in its every recess, presenting me with fresh wonders, and preparing me always to understand them."

It is then, too, that all disputes on many interesting and important subjects shall be set at rest for ever. Of many a revealed truth we can only say now, "It is;" but we can neither comprehend nor say how it is. We now lean on the Omnipotence we cannot understand, and repose in the guidance of wisdom we can neither fathom nor comprehend. When our present night shall be rolled away, we shall not indeed comprehend the infinite or understand the inscrutable, for the larger the circle of light in which we stand the broader and denser the encompassing shadow; but we shall see then what human eye has not yet seen, and

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hear what human ear has not yet heard, and conceive what human heart has not yet conceived. Now, "we know only in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known."

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LECTURE XXXI.

WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS.

OUR brightest apprehensions of the Saviour are dim and imperfect. But it will not be so always.

"*We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*"—1 JOHN iii. 2.

JOHN begins this chapter by expressing his admiration at the height and depth, the length and breadth, the excellence, the sovereignty, and riches of that love which the Father hath bestowed upon us. The Gospel according to St. John used to be called the Gospel of the Father; that endearing epithet being about seventy times applied to God in the course of his Gospel. We can trace the same spirit, and the same pen, in the three Epistles that bear his name. Hence the language of the Gospel is almost transferred to the themes of the Epistle, where he says: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Angels are his sons by creation; we are his sons by adoption and redeeming love. "Therefore the world knoweth us not." The world has still a vulgar, coarse, and material eye, that can see the gaud, and the glitter, and the sparkling baubles of this economy, but cannot see or appreciate true beauty—that inner, moral, and spiritual glory which is all brightness in heaven, and all beauty on earth to the people of God. But says the Apostle, though the world knoweth us not, nevertheless it is true, "Now are we the sons of God;" that is to say, the world's denial of our relationship is not to interfere with the comfort of our persuasion that we are the sons of God. Let the world deny it; let its gibe and its sneer strike you; let its uncharitable reproaches fall upon

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you; neither of them may shake your inner conviction, which is the spring of your greatest peace, that you are the sons of God. "And it doth not yet appear," he adds, "what we shall be." In other words, such is the magnificence of what we shall be that those dim and scattered earnests of it which God vouchsafes only serve to give us the most inadequate apprehension of the weight and splendour of the glory that still awaits us. It does not yet appear anywhere what we shall be. "But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Let us try to ascertain the import of the words, "For we shall see him as he is." It seems to imply that our seeing him as he is will be the *cause* of our being like him; but the original does not so teach. "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him;" and then, as like him, we "shall see him as he is." We know that we shall be like him; and, in the next place, we know that we shall see him as he is. The illative "for" is not the literal and strict meaning of the text.

There are two great facts asserted:—we shall be like him, and we shall see him as he is. I would dwell upon this blessed hope, "We shall see him as he is." What does Paul call it? "Looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour." This hope is certain. We, the sons of God, who see him now so dimly, misapprehend him so frequently, and misconstrue his providential dealings so bitterly—one day shall see him as he is. This is the great desire as it has been the expressed wish of all Christians from the commencement of the Christian economy in Paradise to the present moment. Abraham desired to see his day, and praised him as he caught one ray of it reflected from the distant mountain tops. Isaiah caught a glimpse of the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the virgin born, the Man of sorrows; but the wreath of thorns about his brow so shaded and so darkened his intrinsic glory that the prophet could scarcely believe it was he. Another prophet, smitten with his beauty, thus congratulated his birthplace:

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"Thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be least amid the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall the Ruler come!" And another closed the years of the prophetic age by giving expression to the prediction: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise;" and another: "The desire of all nations shall come." In other words, Christ is the ultimate object of the yearning of all redeemed creation; he is the perfection to which all imperfection soars; he is the model all Christians would imitate; the Sun of Righteousness in whose light all believers would desire to shine; and seeing him imperfectly now, to see him as he is lives in a Christian's heart its deepest yearning—a yearning that in its wants and its cravings conveys a measure of the happiness that will be realised when this promise shall be no longer prophecy, but Christian experience and historic fact. It is no wonder that Christians do desire to see Christ as he is. He has suffered so much, and done so much, and said so much, that it is the craving of nature, were it not the instinct of grace, to desire to see him whose blood cleanseth from all sin, by whose stripes we are healed; to hear one word from the lips of him who spake as never man spake; to draw near and sit like Mary, not at the feet of the awful sufferer, but at the feet of Him who is crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. When you hear of the exploits of some great hero, whose deeds ring in the ears of a grateful and an admiring nation, how far and in what a crowd will you rush to catch a glimpse of him who has shed splendour on your country, and made its name to be power amid the nations of the earth; or some great writer, whose words have sounded as music in many a household, and whose grand thoughts have stirred men's hearts almost like a trumpet—you desire to see so great and illustrious men. It is human nature; and it is only perfecting that desire of human nature when we long to see Him whose words are breaking in waves of music upon the shores of every orb, whose fame is overspreading the whole universe with its imperishable splendour, and

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whose love angels cannot fathom, and the experience of eternity will not be able to exhaust it. Blessed expectancy! precious assurance! we shall see him; and not only see him, but we shall see him just as he is. The aged evangelist in this passage, looking forward to that grand prospect, and numbering himself with all believers, says: "We shall see him as he is." What a glorious level, or rather what a blessed height! John says: I, the seer of Patmos; I, who have seen sights that human eye never saw before; I claim no superiority, no pre-eminence; I am with you, your companion in tribulation; I shall be with you, your companion in glory; not I, but we, shall see him as he is. Mark the emphasis, too, in the words, "As he is." Some now gathered to their rest saw him as he was; and what a sad sight was that!—pierced with griefs; in one word, and that the most expressive, "the Man of sorrows;" as if his whole soul and heart had been saturated with sorrows, as the earth is saturated with its morning dews,—the Man of sorrows; buffeted, wounded, nailed to the accursed tree, laid in the stranger's grave, all for us; wounded for our transgressions. The thief on the cross thus saw him; the Roman soldiers thus saw him; the scribes and the Pharisees thus saw him. We shall never see him as he was; and I thank God for it. Thousands saw him as he was, and perished in his presence; but all that see him as he is shall be like him, and their hearts shall rejoice for ever. But when we see him as he is, there will not then even be the absorption of every trace of what he was. The *was* will be transparent through the *is*; the past will be still traceable amid the splendours of the present; you will see Calvary, and Gethsemane, and the Cross, and the Man of sorrows, but irradiated with the splendour of heaven. John is himself our witness: for what did he see? "I saw in the midst of the throne"—that is, dignity, grandeur, elevation—"a Lamb as if he had just been slain in sacrifice;" the crucified not wholly overlaid by the splendours of the glorified. And again, he saw one like the Son of man in the midst of the golden can-

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dlesticks, wearing many crowns; for myriads, he says, cast their crowns at his feet. What a magnificent thought! the highest hierarchs in heaven, the selectest and the choicest of the redeemed of mankind, take to themselves so little credit for what they are that they take off their bright crowns and cast them in flashing showers before the feet of Him who redeemed them, saying, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto our God; unto him be glory, and thanksgiving, and praise for ever and ever." What a sight will that be! Before his presence sin, and sorrow, and death, and sickness, and the grave have fled for ever. The mock sceptre has blossomed into the sceptre of the universe; the wreath of thorns has become the crown of glory. It will be difficult to conceive that he once was what the evangelists describe him when we shall see the central glory of the redeemed the object of ceaseless adoration, the glory of the universe. We shall see him as he is, because all media are then removed. At present in one sense we see Christ; for faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The apostle Peter says: "Whom having not seen we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." These passages convey that we have now of Christ a dim, dark likeness; real and true, but, owing to us, with great defects; we can form a sort of rough, rude conception of what he is, but we have no full portrait of what he is. In the language of the apostle Paul, "we see him now through a glass darkly." In ancient times, among the Romans and Greeks, mica, a very dim medium, was used for their windows, and at a later period a kind of coarse glass. When we look at a beautiful landscape through common glass it is distorted, twisted, and refracted, by reason of the medium through which we look at it. And when you look at the finest landscape through even the best plate glass, this atmosphere of ours, loaded with soot, and mist, and vapour, even on Eng-

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land's brightest days, and full of floating particles, as every sunbeam will testify to you, prevents us seeing any one thing in its just proportions and intrinsic purity. The fact is, we never yet saw a rose as it is; between that rose and the eye that looks there are so many motes, and so much mist, and vapour, and obscurity, that we do not see it in its perfection. Now we are looking at this moment at Christ through a medium: the medium faith, the mirror his word, the reflection from the sacraments of his institution; but all these media are necessarily imperfect, and we do not see him as he is, we only catch, like Moses, a glimpse of his glory as he sweeps past us. But then not only is the medium through which we see that blessed Saviour now an extremely imperfect one, but the eyes of the spectator are yet more imperfect. If man were as he once was, I have no doubt that he could then look upon the noonday sun in all his splendour, and his eye would be refreshed and strengthened, not destroyed. Everything connected with man's mind, his mental eye, his moral eye, his physical eye, have all undergone a great deterioration; and as far as we read in the Bible now we read that Christ's manifesting himself even in the most transitory way to his own struck them down. His glory burst upon Paul as he journeyed to Damascus, and it struck him blind. John could not bear the unearthly splendour in Patmos. Paul, when raised to the third heaven, —that is, to some near communion with Christ—was so overwhelmed by the intolerable splendour of the scene, dark from excess of light, that he too was unable either to express or to embody in his own eloquent words the glory of the vision. But a day comes when not only the medium shall be altered, but the eye with which we look, the eye of the mind, the eye of the heart, the eye of the conscience, the eye of the body, shall all be purified, touched with the eye-salve that John speaks of in the Apocalypse; and then not only will he be seen as he is, but we shall be able to endure —nay, not to endure, but to glory, and to be refreshed

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and strengthened by the beatific vision. The media through which we now see him shall all be removed. At present the whole economy of man is not only injured, but if the eyes of the mind, of the conscience, of the heart, of the body, be the instruments with which we look, who does not know that rising up from the swamps and marshes that are about every heart are passions, and appetites, and desires, that like mists, and vapours, and damps, darken the whole window through which we look, render the whole vision obscure; till instead of seeing Christ as he is, we are often constrained to say that we see him so imperfectly, and sometimes, like objects seen through a mist, so distorted and altered in appearance, that, like the poor apostles tossed upon the waves, when he comes to deliver us we think he comes to exercise vengeance, and we are afraid, or, like Peter, beg that he would depart, for we are sinful men, and not speak to us any more. But a day comes, that day to which John alludes, when the eye shall be purified and strengthened, when no mists or exhalations shall load the air, or dim the eye; when in the clear and intense light of everlasting noon we shall see him as he is. And it will be a sight so magnificent that we shall count all sights worthless, and all scenes pale, and all beauty deformed, and all excellence as dross, in comparison of the excellence of Him who is the chief of ten thousand, and altogether lovely. At present the Bible is precious, sacraments are precious, preaching is precious, hope is precious, faith is precious; we cannot do without them; they are necessary in this imperfect economy. But then they will be all swept away. When Christ shall be seen as he is, then all those things that are useful now will be dissolved. We do not want the perfect portrait when the great original is present; we do not want the pure description when the great and glorious object of it is near us; we do not need the telescope to see the near, for the distant then will have become near; we do not need symbols, for the substance will have come; we do not need shadow, for the body will have come; and Christ himself will

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take the place of Scripture, and of sacraments, and of preaching; and we shall need no more to be told about him, for we shall see him as he is; and like Sheba's queen when introduced to King Solomon, we shall be constrained in a higher strain and in a loftier key to admit that one-half his excellence, and his glory, and his perfection, was not told us.

The Lord's Supper, therefore, carries back to as he was; but that would not be enough; it stretches forward also to what he is. That glorious festival is a pledge and a prophecy that we shall see Christ as he is. Like all the rites and institutions of this present economy, it will one day be merged in that future age to which all the past has contributed, and in which all the present will be crowned. The Lord's Supper reminds us of the beautiful sisterhood of evergreens; the laurel, the pine, the fir, the cedar, that you find in the country in the depth of winter. They seem to retain their verdure to keep open the pathway of the returning summer; they tell us that summer was, and they prophesy in their verdant beauty that summer will be again; they keep open the path between the summers, cheering and reminding. Thus that institution in this world's dreary winter is covered with fragrant memories of a summer that closed in Eden, but was redeemed on Calvary; and that will end in the everlasting summer that shall never have an evening, a winter, or a cloud. It connects and links beautifully together the past and the present; the was and the is; the glory that is gone, and the brighter glory that yet will be; and it reminds us that as Christ was, so Christ will be. Faith looks back with retrospective glance to the cross, and sees him as he was; love looks upward with burning eye, and sings as its own under-song: "Whom having not seen I love; and whom though now I see him not, yet believing I rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and hope looks forward to the crown, and rejoices with joy unspeakable that it shall see him as he is. Faith, hope, charity, the three Christian graces, derive nutriment, strength, inspiration, encouragement, from that

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holy institution, for it brings them all into exercise. "Now are we the sons of God." What a blessed thought! If I be God's son, then my Bible is his letter to me; prayer is an address to my Father; I am admitted to the privileges of his home. The communion-table is our Father's, we are the sons of that Father.; we are heirs in reversion of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. When we come to that communion-table, it is not as Churchmen, nor as Dissenters, nor as Independents, nor as Wesleyans, or if there be any other; but as sons of God. A father expects at his board not sectarians, but sons. But if underlying the Churchman and the Dissenter there be the son of God, let him come. It is our Father's table; it is not the place of an offended judge; it is not the scene of terror; it is a joyous festival.

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LECTURE XXXII.

THE WAY THERE.

We need to be informed not only of the splendour and blessedness of the future rest, but also to be made acquainted with the way there, and the difficulties and obstructions we must encounter.

"*Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*"—Acts xiv. 22.

We are not yet arrived in the everlasting rest; we are still on the arena of conflict, amidst scenes of trouble, and through much, not a little, tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God. But even now there is a compensatory experience that as the troubles of Christians abound their consolations abound also.

The apostles and those that were with them confirmed the souls of the disciples, and exhorted them to continue in the faith. *To confirm* means *to strengthen, or invigorate* the souls of the disciples. Such strengthening we need greatly. Sometimes doubts cast their dark shadows over the brightest mind, and lie cold on the sunniest heart—doubts we cannot eject, demanding to be answered, not to be ignored. These we shall find best solved by reference to that blessed word which ends all controversy and settles all doubt. Sometimes difficulties, and perplexing questions, and seeming contradictions, crowd upon us, and we cannot dissolve them. We need to have our minds strengthened to grapple with, and to master them. A doubting mind is more healthy so far than a mind that acquiesces in everything without examination. When doubts occur they ought to be

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answered, not to be treated with contempt. Sometimes, too, we are beset by conflicts and controversies between what pleasure and profit woo us to, and what conscience condemns and the Word of God denounces. Sometimes, too, the syren song of pleasure, the gilding and the glory of time, invite us to renounce the way, the truth, and the life, and to conform to usages we cannot praise. In all these temptations we need to be upheld. If that upholding rested on our own hearts' strength we should very soon fall; but thanks be to God, there is One that perfects his strength in our weakness, and makes his grace sufficient for us. But the duty of the apostle, or the minister, is not to try to take the place of the Spirit of God, but to explain to the doubting, and the afflicted, how they may be confirmed and strengthened in that good course and in that holy profession which they have accepted. How does God thus confirm and strengthen us? First of all, by revealing to each of us exceeding great and precious promises. These, like stars illuminating the sky, like flowers beautifying the earth, are given not to make God more merciful, but to show us what he is ready always and everywhere to do for them that look to him and pray to him. The promises in Scripture ought to be made the material of prayer. Whatever God has promised that you may turn into prayer. If you go into the future, seeing the depths that yawn before you, and nothing else, you must despair and fall; but if you go into all its depths, its cold waves, its stormy trials, holding fast one grand promise: "I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee; when thou passest through the fires they shall not kindle upon thee, and when thou passest through the waters they shall not overflow thee;" "a mother may forget her infant, but I will never forget thee; the mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not depart, and the covenant of my peace shall not be removed"—you cannot fail. In these you have springs of everlasting strength; your feet are upon the solid rock—let the sea roar, let the waves rise, let

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the mountains shake with the swelling thereof; there is a river whose streams make glad the city of your God, your heart is confirmed, your faith is strengthened, and you go into the future not leaning upon the void, but leaning upon the Rock of Ages.

God confirms and strengthens his people by disclosing to them the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Satan," we are told, "hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." You will not be perfect in the future, any more than in the past; you will falter in thought, in word, in deed; you will be constrained to cry from the very depths of your heart, "If thou, O Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, who could stand?" But if the Spirit of God disclose to your soul the finished work, the atoning blood, the glorious righteousness, the perfect sacrifice of Him who died the just for the unjust, to bring us unto himself, then you will be confirmed; you will see that despair is not duty, that despondency is sin, and you will be brought back to that Rock that is higher than you, there to lay the burden of your sins, that they all may be forgiven; there to receive that glorious righteousness trusting in which you are perfect, and spotless, and without fault before God. The Spirit of God confirms the hearts of his people by himself taking up his dwelling in the depths of those hearts. We often forget this precious truth, that not only did Christ die eighteen hundred years ago, not only did he ascend from the Mount of Olives into that glory which eye hath not seen, but that he has sent his Representative, his Vicar, to the church below. "It is expedient," he says, "that I go away, for if I go not away the Holy Spirit will not come unto you." Now if we be Christians the Holy Ghost dwells in our hearts. What a sublime, a glorious, I might almost add an awful thought is this, that the Third Person in the glorious and blessed Trinity takes up his residence in the recesses of the humblest heart of the humblest Christian, and in the nooks of that heart lights up the sunshine of heaven, strikes wells

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of living water that flow up in streams of consolation, preaches to the inmost heart what the preacher addresses to the outward ear, and engraves in indelible, in living and luminous letters all the love, and all the goodness, and all the mercy of our God! Out of the depth and sweetness of his own infinite love, out of the fulness of his own infinitely merciful and perfect character, he looks forgivingly on our sins, our selfishness, our suspicions, our doubts; and unrepelled by our unworthiness he pleads and intercedes within us with groanings that cannot be uttered, testifying to us of the love that never fails, of the mercy that ever forgives, of the Saviour that ever intercedes, and of the gates of glory that are ever open. So we wend our way upward rejoicing.

The apostles also "exhorted them to continue in the faith." In progress in the faith. We all think ourselves far more learned than we are. It is wonderful how little we know; and he that knows most of his Bible knows and feels best how little he knows. It is the greatest and the most illustrious philosopher who feels humbled; it is the sciolist who knows nothing that feels proud. The longer I live the more I am convinced of this, that the most overwhelming proof of the Divine inspiration of the Bible lies in the heartfelt and experimental knowledge of its contents; and if the authors of the celebrated seven Essays and Reviews had known the Bible better they would have spoken with greater reverence and respect about it. Its irresistible proof of divinity is in its contents; and as long as you argue about it outside so long you can be met by counter arguments; but when you feel that this book has enriched your heart with peace, has illuminated your mind with light, has made the problems of the philosopher the axioms of the Christian, has given peace to your conscience, has lighted up the future with imperishable splendours, you can say, That the Bible is the book of God is no more with me a question to be discussed, it is an experience. It has long ago gone out of the region of discussion, and it has come into the warm and living region of experimental Christianity: "I know in whom

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I have believed, and that he is able to keep what I have committed unto him against that day." We do not know the preciousness of a blessing till we lose it. If you could be placed in circumstances such as would give you the idea of the extinction of the Bible, the departure of Christianity like an evanescent vision, leaving behind it the consciousness of the awful, yawning vacuum and chasm in the human heart, you would then feel what a precious presence is the Gospel, what a terrible catastrophe would be its departure from the world and from mankind. We do not value the blessing of pure air, because we have never been wholly without it. We do not appreciate the blessing of pure water, because there is abundance of it. By a strange law (and it is a very sad law), the greater, the richer, the more continuous our blessings, the less we are thankful for them, because the less we feel them. Those who have never been ill do not appreciate the blessing of health. We do not know the choicest blessings that are stored and treasured in the Gospel of Christ till the time comes when these blessings take flight and leave you without God, and without Christ, and without hope in the world. That time has never come to you, therefore you have never felt what a blessing the Gospel is. But you may increase and grow in experimental acquaintance with its beauty, with its light, with its loveliness, with its truth, with its hopes and its joys, and thus you will have an anchor sure and steadfast within the veil, which cannot be removed. We are to grow not only in the knowledge of this Gospel, but in the profession of it. How often do you meet with people who are not ashamed to profess to be scholars, physicians, lawyers, but feel utterly ashamed to profess that they are Christians. It is one thing to boast that you are a Christian—that is not right—it is a different thing and a very dutiful thing to profess and not to be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. Grow in the practice of it. What should a Christian's whole character be? A living epistle written by the Holy Ghost, seen and read of all men. Grow also in your zeal and efforts to extend the faith.

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A blessing that man keeps to himself never is the richest blessing. If you feel it to be a great blessing you will feel it to be a great duty to distribute and make it known.

We now come to the most important clause—"that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Christianity is not the source of the tribulation through which we must pass. Sometimes persons are disposed to blame Christianity for the troubles they have to deal with; but the truth is that troubles are indigenous to the world, and the offspring of sin. Christianity does not create the troubles, it creates the heart and the heroism that lasts and triumphs over the trouble and is more than conqueror through Him that loveth us. If you could extinguish Christianity to-morrow you would not extinguish sickness, sorrow, disease, death, war, plague, pestilence. The Gospel is not the mother of these, it did not originate these; if it has any connection with them it is in sweetening your experience of them, strengthening you to grapple with them, and making you more than conqueror out of the midst of them all. But Christianity does not exempt those that profess it from suffering. It is as great a mistake to suppose that the Gospel exempts its people from suffering as that the Gospel creates the suffering. For instance, when a man is truly converted, and his heart is changed, his nerves remain as sensitive, his nature as weak, his flesh as liable to pain, his mind as open to troubles, to perplexities and fears. The Gospel does not extinguish the experience of mankind, but it imparts to the Christian in the midst of that experience a vigorous and elastic faith which becomes the victory. Hence Christians must expect to meet with troubles like other people; they must expect to be ill as other people are; but then we expect that they will in the midst of their troubles show that they have a capital on which to draw that other people have not, a strength to be made perfect in their weakness which others are strangers to, and that the Gospel that makes them morally to differ makes them mentally and

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socially superior to all that are aliens and strangers to its transforming power, its mighty and its blessed consolations. And in the third place, we find here one of the striking proofs of the truth and sincerity of the apostles, that they did not conceal from the earlier converts what was before them. Mahomet concealed the dangers of the battle; he assured them only of victory, of progress, of sensual prosperity, and happiness. But it must often have struck one in reading the last words of our Blessed Lord, and the admonitions of his inspired apostles, how constantly they tell their converts, We invite you to no soft and beautiful lawn; we ask you to come to a battle-field. We hold out before you in this world no fortune, no *éclat*, no human prizes, no national and social dignities; we hold out to you a cross, shame, scorn, ignominy, contempt. "In the world ye *shall* have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace." None but one who knew that it was the everlasting truth of God that he was speaking would have thus addressed the world in so plain terms, in terms fitted to repel men from the Gospel of Christ; and they were driven, therefore, to accept it only on one ground, that it contained the only name under heaven by which men could be saved. We must expect this year, and all the rest of our life, troubles. It is perhaps well that no one can tell himself or his brother what troubles are to befall him in the future. Sickness will no doubt gnaw the heart and waste the beauty of one; losses in estate, vicissitudes in property, changes of various sorts, will affect, and vex, and trouble another. Death will enter the home of a third, and lay his finger where we thought it would be last laid, and summon to the silent land one that we thought likely to live thirty, or forty, or fifty years; and footfalls that are now music will be heard no more; and countenances that are now sunshine will be lost in the shadow of death; and hearts that are now bounding and beating will be cold and still in the grave. Into what home sickness will find admission, on what heart death will lay his cold hand, God only knows.

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But this we do know, that we cannot reach the everlasting rest except through tribulation—that we cannot get to life except through death. But it is a blessed thought that a Christian's last sleep is everlasting refreshment, and that he passes from life not to death, but from life to life, and joy, and happiness for ever. But through tribulations of some sort we must pass; that bitter yet not untempered cup in some shape we must drink, and he that has least tasted of sorrow's bitter herbs has the least signature on his brow and evidence in his soul that he is one of the sons of God and the heirs of glory. We shall pass through tribulation perhaps in another shape; if not outer, it may be inner. There is many a one whose outward prosperity we admire, perhaps envy; whose wealth we think all that heart can desire or that hand can possibly administer; but we little know that that splendid equipage conceals a broken and a bleeding heart. We little know that the noble palace we admire as the evidence of the highest happiness actualized on earth may under its roof-tree have more sighs, and sorrows, and tears, than the meanest Irish hut or the humblest Highland shielin. There is an inner sorrow far more keen than the world's outer afflictions, and it needs more of the Spirit of God and of the consolations of the Cross to mitigate, and to dilute it, and to sustain us in it, than in the midst of those more coarse and vulgar troubles of which all are more or less the heirs, and of which all have had frequent experience. But if through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God, there will not be one drop more than is expedient and needful, nay, essential for us. What a grand thought that is—If I believed that there was no God in our world, if I believed that the world was consigned to chance, to accident, to change, I should utterly despair; but because I know and am persuaded, on the strongest and the surest grounds, that there is not a thorn in your pillow that God does not see, and that he does not suffer to be there until it has accomplished the mission that he gave it—because I believe that there is not a bitter element

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in the cup of your life that God does not see in his wisdom to be most expedient, in his love to be most beneficent, therefore I can never despair! Glorious thought! consolatory truth! there is a needs be for that great loss, for that keen and poignant grief, for that wasting and pining sickness. There is a needs be for the entrance of death into the happiest home, and for the ascent from your fireside of the most beloved and cherished ornament and glory of it. Give me that one thought, that God's love, infinite love, love that does not falter, and never fails, has decreed this, whatever it be, for me; that his wisdom, infinite wisdom that cannot err, has seen it to be necessary, and that a presence that nothing can resist superintends its action; then whatever tribulation I have to pass through, I know it was prepared and arranged from everlasting ages, and that it is as necessary that I should have that ache, and experience that loss, and feel that gnawing sorrow in my heart, that pining sickness in my frame, that bitter prescription laid at my door, as that God should have loved me, and Christ should have died for me, and the Bible should have been written to teach and instruct me. Let us take this truth home to our hearts, carrying it into life's troubles and life's griefs, into our sorrows and our losses, and then we shall be able to say, "The cup that my Father"—true of the meanest Christian here as it was of Christ—"The cup that my Father has given me to drink, shall I not drink it? Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt. Our Father in heaven, thy will be done on earth even as it is done in heaven." Such will be the feeling of a Christian in passing through the tribulations on every wave of which there is inscribed, luminous and legible, a needs be. If we have to pass through tribulation it is one of the proofs that we are in the right way home. That man who is walking on a smooth and beautiful road on which no tempest beats, where there are no rocks, nor broken stones, nor crookedness, nor cold, nor weariness, nor want, ought to ponder well, if not retrace his steps, for the presumption is the

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strongest possible that he has lost the way to heaven, and that he has taken a wrong road. But, on the contrary, when the winds beat upon you, when the frosts chill you, when the rough road wounds the feet, the weary feet that tread it, when the rains descend, and thousands of troubles crowd around you and threaten to overwhelm you, take heart, lift up your heads, let not your hearts be troubled; do not despair; yours is the seal and the signature of God, the mark that you are marching on the road that leads to Immanuel's land, and in the midst of that great tribulation, spoken of in the 7th chapter of the Apocalypse, which culminates in a glory that shall never die and in an inheritance that shall never pass away. This thought lightens trouble and sweetens our experience of it, for it is the way to our Father's house, and we are on the road to a kingdom of glory.

If we feel that we are thus on the road that leads to heaven, that thus lifts us into the kingdom of God, let us hasten on. A traveller is always in a hurry to get home. What would you say of that traveller who was so charmed with an inn he found by the way, or so pleased with the flowers that blossomed on the road-side, that he spent all his time in enjoying the hospitalities of the one or in admiring the beauty of the other, thinking nothing of his happy and his distant home? Or what would you think of that person who, setting out by train to Edinburgh from Euston Square, is so delighted with the refreshments at Stafford that he stops there too long, and the train leaves and he loses his journey home? You would say his heart was not at the end of his journey. So with him who is delighted with the charms, the pleasures, and amusements of life, in themselves legitimate and proper, but in the excess and idolatry of them most pernicious and destructive. So that man gives evidence that his heart is not where Christ is who is so charmed with the inn, so pleased with the refreshments of the midway station, that he tarries there, and loses for a day, for a year, it may be for ever, the route that leads to heaven.

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Let us then learn, first, to expect tribulation. It is the law of our Christian profession: "through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." Secondly, let us learn to judge that we are in the way, the right way, by the troubles that beset us in it; and third, let us while in that way draw down consolation, and comfort, and hope, from God, who has assured us that though no tribulation for the present seemeth joyous, but rather grievous, yet afterwards it worketh out the peaceable fruits of righteousness; that if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him. Then let troubles come, let storms beat; let each future year be to each of us individually, socially, nationally, laden with worse troubles than we have yet witnessed, with heavier trials than any under the shadow of which we have yet passed; yet we know it is not chance that acts thus. We know all is accomplishing the mission, embodying the mind and fulfilling the purpose of our God. Not a tempest sweeps through the earth that is not needful; not a trouble breaks upon the shores of a human heart that is not necessary. If so, let us take heart and rejoice that we are in the road that leads upward to God, that we bear the signature of his children, and if children then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Throughout all the journey that yet remains may the Spirit of God confirm our hearts, may he strengthen us to continue in the faith; and in the midst of the greatest tribulations through which we may have soon to pass may he open in each of our hearts a living spring of living water springing up even into everlasting life; till when the years of this world are ended—and each year brings us nearer to its close—we may find it is only transference to a brighter and a better, to a kingdom that never can be moved.

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LECTURE XXXIII.

HELP HERE.

THE upper and under world have ceaseless intercourse by the new and living way. Angels come down in shining troops, and encamp around the people of God.

"*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*"—HEBREWS i. 14.

MODERN theology too much ignores the truth recorded here. Is there then any communion between heaven and earth? Have the redeemed in glory any sympathy with the redeemed that are on earth? Has the church militant directly or indirectly any actual relationship to the church triumphant that is above? These are anxious questions. As friend after friend passes into the shadow of the grave; as near and dear relatives ascend, in obedience to the invitation, "Come up higher;" instinctively our hearts follow them to the heavenly rest; and we long to know—it is an instinct we cannot help—if their love to us is as warm as our remembrance of them. Is the gulf between heaven and earth like the gulf between heaven and hell, impassable? Do those who fill the choirs of the blessed hear, or know, or see us, or in any way sympathize with us who are in the cold crypt of the church below? It is a very common notion that the world of redeemed spirits and the world of Christians struggling upon earth are at the antipodes of each other, that the blessed in heaven are too happy to think of us they have left behind them, and that we have little to do with them; as if they would not condescend to look back, however earnestly and lovingly we look after them; that a great gulf is fixed between us, which

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none can pass. Is it so? Is there proof in Scripture that it is so? One text would settle the whole controversy, and solve the difficulty. This is certain, angels descend from the choirs of the blessed, and minister to the company of the suffering; those angels return from their ministry to the choirs of the happy; and can we suppose they will be silent on what they have seen and to whom they have ministered below? When Adam and Eve were sent forth from Paradise, their retreating footsteps left all a wilderness behind them that was a garden before, they lost the favour, and forfeited the presence of God. But did God give them up? did he forsake them? They cut, as it were, the mooring-chains that fastened earth, the old earth, to the continent of heaven; and having done so, a deep sea, impassable and awful, rolled between them. Did God cease to have any correspondence with them? Did he let them go in their aberration from him without hope and without the pledge or the promise of reunion? The very reverse. First he told them, "The woman's seed shall bruise the serpent's head;" and that solitary promise, like a bright star upon the brow of night, irradiated their footsteps as they went forth into the world's desert, to fertilize its soil with the sweat of their brow, and to water its flowers with the tears of their weeping eyes. A smile of God irradiated the sacrifice of Abel. God condescended to walk, literally to walk, with Enoch and with Noah on the face of the earth. Abraham gave hospitality to heavenly visitants in his patriarchal tent upon the plains of Mamre. Lot also entertained angels. And as if to show that the reunion of what had been dissolved was partially restored, he showed to Jacob as he slept in the desert a ladder, gangway, or pathway, between heaven and earth; and on this the angels of God ascending and descending; and Jacob discovered when he woke that, having lain down in a lonely desert, he had really been sleeping at the gates of heaven. When our Lord came, he said that this patriarch's vision is not the vision of an hour, but a permanent fact; he says: "Hereafter shall

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ye see heaven open, and the angels of God descending and ascending upon the Son of man;" that is, what the patriarch saw was not a personal and peculiar vision, but the opening of a great and magnificent truth, namely, that the angels are ministering spirits to them that are the heirs of salvation. There is a very beautiful line in Campbell's "Pleasures of Hope," quoted frequently as exquisite poetry, but which is unquestionably very bad theology. He says:

"Like angel visits, few and far between."

Angel visits are neither few nor far between; but in the language of our Lord, they ascend and descend upon the Son of man; that is, by Christ the Mediator. It is evident that we do not see them; that is matter of fact and of human experience; but still it may not be less real. We do not see the friend at Dover with whom we communicate at London Bridge by the medium of the electric telegraph; and yet we communicate with that friend. We do not see the wire, nor the lightning that flashes along that wire as it carries the message on its wings, and conveys our wishes, or our desires, or our affliction, or our joy. So in the same manner we may not see angels, and yet every church may be filled with angels; our homes may be filled with angels; in our greatest trials, struggles, sorrows, griefs, angels may be ministering to us and strengthening us. But does not this interfere with the mediatorial work of the Saviour? Not at all. An angel came, we are told, and strengthened him; angels conveyed the pious poor man to Abraham's bosom; angels appeared in the cave of Arimathea, and preached the Gospel to the women: "He is not here, but risen." Angels not *shall be*, as if it were a prophecy of the future, but angels *are*—it is their normal function—ministering spirits unto them that are the heirs of salvation. In a very beautiful passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, not less expressive than this, it is said: "Ye are come"—not ye *will* come, but ye *are* come—"unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God; and to an

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innumerable company of angels;" we are come to it; we are placed in the midst of them; they encamp round about us; "to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven; to God the judge of all; and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Or in the words of Milton:

> "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
> Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep;
> All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,
> Both day and night."

That we do not see the angels is no argument. That the Romish Church has perverted and corrupted this truth, is no argument against it. Our mortal eyes can only see what is palpable, material, and tangible; but we know, and science has learned the fact, that there are substances in our world material, yet invisible and impalpable to us. The air we breathe is invisible, it is impalpable, though not imponderable; hydrogen gas is twelve times lighter than the air we breathe; we do not see it. So there may be agencies, powers, influences, in the air, in our homes, in our sanctuaries, in our counting-houses, in the world, on the ocean, on the field of conflict, influencing, actuating, strengthening, encouraging; not taking the place of Christ, but emissaries executing Christ's behests, and fulfilling his purposes of loving-kindness to all that believe in his holy name. We read, for instance, in the New Testament that fallen angels enter the human heart, and tempt, and touch, and besiege it. Shall we admit that fallen angels may reach the heart, irrespective of the volition of its possessor, and that good angels may not do so? Shall we believe that Satan can enter the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to tempt them to lie and to do what is unholy, and shall we deny that holy angels may enter the hearts of believers, and whisper the strains of heaven, and spread around them the atmosphere of the blessed, and encourage them in the way that is good, and strengthen them to bear the burden that is very heavy? Protestants often recoil at

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the first hearing of such words as these: they instantly think, Why, this is Romanism. But Romanism is the perversion and the corruption of grand truths. Because the Roman Catholic worships angels, we must not deny an apostle's assertion that angels are ministering spirits to them that are the heirs of salvation; because they put the angel in the room of Christ, we must not therefore deny that the angel may be the messenger and the ambassador of Christ. We may not see them; we may not know the media through which and by which they come to us; but if you will take a lexicon, or Cruden's Concordance to the Bible, and turn to the page on which is written "angels," you will be astonished to discover what a momentous part angels have played in the history of the world, and in the government of Christ's church. I do not see that this interferes with Christ's presence or with Christ's mediation, any more than what we call the laws of the universe interfere with the sovereignty and the immediate presence of God. An angel, for instance, appeared to Elijah, fleeing from the wrath of Jezebel, when he went, in the words of Scripture, a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat under the juniper-tree, and when he said of himself that he wished he might die: "O Lord, take away my life." He was on the very verge of committing suicide; he had given up all for lost, as he lay and slept under the juniper-tree. An angel touched him, and he took heart, and resumed his march of duty and obedience. When the Assyrian army went up against Hezekiah, the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp a hundred and eighty thousand men. In the words of a great poet—I wish he had been as good a man—

> "The angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
> And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
> And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
> And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew still."

A greater than he, Dr. Chalmers, in his "Astronomical Discourses," writes: "Angels love us with a love which a family on earth bears to a younger sister."

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Perhaps angels in heaven constitute one family; believers upon earth constitute another family; and thus they feel to us that affection which one family connected by ties of consanguinity, and sympathy, and place, feels towards another family upon earth. And is it not a very interesting thought that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him?" that God may send an angel to comfort, strengthen, encourage, and preserve? This does not imply that we are to pray to the angels, but that we are to pray to the God of the angels to fulfil his promises, and to make his angels ministering spirits to us, who are the heirs of salvation.

Connected with the intercourse between the higher and the lower world, there is a most interesting question, beset with extreme difficulties. Do our near and dear ones who have preceded us to glory in any shape or in any way know us, love us, or hold communion or intercourse with us? That angels do so is an unquestionable fact; whether those that have preceded us to the better land do so is a very different question. All that Scripture says on the subject I have gathered. The amount of its information I will endeavour very briefly to state. Bishop Pearson, one of the most earnest and most thoughtful men that ever lived, and one of the most learned, writing upon that article in what is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, the communion of saints, says: "As Christ, in whom believers live, is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, so have all believers on earth fellowship with all saints who from the death of Abel have ever departed in the true faith and fear of God." In other words, the church of Christ is partly composed of spirits disembodied, and in heaven; partly of spirits embodied, and acting through the flesh on earth. The church of Christ is not a sect, a denomination, nor a party; it is what is called the Catholic church. No time tells its age; no space includes its magnitude; no figures can count its numbers; all that are in grace throughout the world, and all that are in glory in the better land, con-

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stitute together the one church of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must not suppose that the church of Christ is either a denomination, or a sect, or even the visible communion of professing Christians upon earth; it is the whole company of all that are in heaven added to the whole company of all that have been, are, or will be upon earth. The communion of saints, therefore, is the communion of the believer on earth with all saints throughout the universe. Hence the apostle tells us: "Ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets as living stones; Jesus Christ being the chief corner and foundation stone." Christ is in the midst of that church, linking all together, cementing them by his love; having laid them upon the one foundation, and making them grow up a holy temple, whose builder and whose maker is God. The same excellent prelate speaking of that same article says: "The communion of saints on earth with those that are regenerated is demonstrated by their communion with saints alive. Death, which is nothing else but the separation of the soul from the body, makes no separation in the mystical union, and no break of the spiritual conjunction; and consequently there must continue the same communion between those that remain on earth and those that are in heaven, because both rest upon the same foundation." Cyprian, the Bishop of Carthage, says: "In heaven a vast multitude of them that are dear to us await our arrival; a multitude of parents, brethren, and children, who are now secure of their own salvation, and are only anxious about ours." Those that are gone before us recollect this world, and those they have left behind them. It seems to me an irrefragable conclusion that those who have gone before us must recollect them they have left behind. The life that now is shapes the life that is to be; the impressions we receive in time we never can forget in the realms of eternity. Separate our growth here from our recollections there, and you separate the individual from himself. Were the past blotted out, for instance, from the memory of some one admitted into heaven, he could not

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believe himself to be the same person. As long as I am placed anywhere, so long the *I* must recollect what it was, what it has gone through, what influences it has felt, what motives have inspired it, and what progress it has made. Separate in my memory my past from my present, and you annihilate me—you create a totally distinct and different being. We cannot conceive memory to be expunged in heaven, because we cannot conceive the individual to be annihilated there. Place me in the heights or place me in the depths—place me where you please in the orbs of the universe—I must recollect the preacher I listened to, the sermons I heard, the Bible I read, the fireside by which I prayed, the roof-tree under which I dwelt, the sorrows by which I was burdened, and the joys by which I was gladdened. And if you could for one moment so separate the past from the present, earth from heaven, what has made me from what I am become, you annihilate me, and you place in my stead and room another and a distinct creation. Shall the lost in misery recollect those they have left on earth, as the rich man did when he prayed that some one might rise from the dead, and go and speak to his five brethren, and shall the saved in heaven not recollect those they have left behind them? I believe that those who have gone before, your wives, your husbands, your children, your mothers, your fathers, perfectly recollect what you were, and where you were; and have not forgotten, but on the contrary see in intenser light and with greater sharpness, all the events, and intercourse, and communion, and incidents, and accidents, that God in his providence blessed to their conversion and everlasting life.

But I proceed a step farther. I believe that the spirits of the departed not only recollect those they have left behind them, but that they know vastly more of us than we know of them. Heaven—what we call heaven—is not a place, but a condition. Some have very foolishly tried to show where heaven is and where hell may be. They say that heaven is probably in those exquisitely beautiful planets in the solar system that

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rise upon the brow of night with such radiance and splendour that all watching eyes must admire. Martin Tupper thinks the moon, which seems to us a wreck, and in which you can see no trace of water, nothing, in short, but awful evidences of volcanic explosions the most terrific, must be the place of the lost. We have no evidence of this, we have no facts that prove it; I therefore prefer vastly the opinion of Dr. Chalmers, that the saved, or those that have gone before us, are simply in an altered state. Our dead in Christ may be nearer us at this moment than our friends in Ireland or in Scotland, across the Tweed or beyond St. George's Channel. If they are merely in a separate condition, not in a distant locality, then it may be, that they see us and know us vastly better than we know them. The apostle tells us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses;" what witnesses? Those whom he has enumerated in that roll-call of the illustrious dead, the 11th chapter to the Hebrews, which immediately precedes it. What is a cloud? Water evaporated from the earth, and all glorious and radiant in the sweet sunshine. What is the cloud of believers? Christians that once were on earth; now lifted up, and shining in the glories of that Sun of righteousness who never sets. The apostle says we are compassed about with them. Dean Alford, in his Greek Critical New Testament, observes: "This passage implies communion between the church triumphant and the church below. It proves that they who have entered the heavenly rest are perfectly conscious of what is passing among us." This is the opinion of a very sober-minded, learned, and able scholar. The figure that the apostle uses necessitates that interpretation; for what is his idea? It is this. In ancient Greece wrestlers and foot-racers carried on their exercises on the floor below; around them arose an amphitheatre, of which you may behold remains in the city of Rome at this day, in successive concentric tiers far up into the sky, without a roof, or any artificial light; the spectators sat in those tiers look-

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ing down upon the wrestlers on the floor; there might have been twenty, or thirty, or even a hundred thousand spectators. You know that if you were to look from the floor of an amphitheatre up to the vast concentric circles of spectators that look down from above, you would not see faces, unless your sight were preternaturally long; all would seem to you like a dim and a misty cloud, constituting a vast mass of human beings, of which you were the central object. All believers who have preceded us to glory are looking down upon us "running the race set before us," "fighting the good fight;" and he draws a motive from it: "Wherefore, seeing we are surrounded with so great a cloud of witnesses"—seeing our fathers, our mothers, our sisters, our brothers, all that feel interested in us, are looking at us; seeing we are the objects of such intense interest—"let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." This seems to me an irresistible proof not only that angels minister to us, but that the spirits of the departed in glory know more of us than we can know of them. Perhaps, young man, that spirit of a father beloved looks down, and watches you, and yearns to see you numbered with the saints in glory everlasting. Perhaps, daughter, that mother in the realms of the blessed hangs over you with an interest and a sympathy no words of mine can express, and cries, though you cannot hear the words, "Come up hither; run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of your faith." Suppose that the spirits of those that have preceded us to heaven do not personally see, and know, and witness our experience or history upon earth; may we not most reasonably infer that if angels are ministering spirits on earth unto them that are the heirs of salvation—and of this we have no doubt, because Scripture has settled it—an angel coming from heaven to minister at Christ's bidding to a son, or a daughter upon earth, when he ascends to the company of the blessed will

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tell the father or mother there what is your state, what are your struggles, your difficulties, your trials, and how great and real is your consecration to the service of the Lord your God? The spirits of the departed not only know more of us than we know of them, but they must still constantly love us. We cannot conceive that the love of a parent to a child ceases when that parent is made perfect. On the contrary, faith shall be lost in fruition, hope shall be merged in having, but love abideth for ever. Hence the redeemed that are in heaven and the redeemed that are on earth may, like Saul and Jonathan, have been lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death may not be disunited. If therefore we must suppose that the love which fills the heart of a parent upon earth is not quenched in heaven—that the interest we feel in those that are our own flesh and blood is indelible for ever—it seems a logical consequence of this that those who are in heaven not only know us, but that they love us with a love that never falters or fails. Very beautifully has a poet said:

"I feel them with their rustling pinions sweeping,
The damp dew gathering on my brow;
I see them in their lonely vigils keeping
Their midnight watch beside me now.
I know that countless spirits in their love
Are gazing on me from their homes above."

But there is one text that seems still more decidedly to show this, and that is: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come." Who is the Bride? If we read the passage in Revelation xxii., we shall find that the Bride is the church in glory. The Holy Spirit says, "Come," and the Bride, that is, the church in glory, says "Come;" and that very fact indicates that the redeemed in heaven, who constitute the Bride, the whole company of Christ's church in glory, feel an interest in those they have left behind them; and if not personally and directly, and audibly, which I do not affirm, in effect they say, "Come;" "and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

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Has a spirit from the realms of glory ever audibly spoken or visibly manifested itself to those who are sojourners and pilgrims upon the earth? I know of one instance only in the Scripture that proves such a phenomenon ever to have occurred; and that instance is certainly not one on which we can dwell with satisfaction or delight. It is contained in 1 Samuel xxviii. at the 7th verse, where we read the following words: "Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her;" it was a bad man that wanted this information. "And his servants said unto him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor. And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and he went, and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night." Now all this looks bad; he disguised himself, lest his royalty should be discovered; he came by night, as Nicodemus once came, afraid to show himself openly by day; and he said: "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring him up, whom I shall name to thee. And the woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those that have familiar spirits, and the wizards, out of the land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my life, to cause me to die? And Saul sware to her by the Lord, saying, As the Lord liveth, there shall no punishment happen to thee for this thing. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel"—it seems the irresistible inference that Samuel actually appeared—"when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice: and the woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. And the king said unto her, Be not afraid: for what sawest thou? And the woman said unto Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. And he said unto her, What form is he of? And she said, An old man cometh up: and he is covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with

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his face to the ground, and bowed himself." This same being, called from the realms of the happy, and sent by God for a mysterious purpose — "Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? And the Lord hath done to him, as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even to David: because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines: and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." This is the only instance in Scripture in which a spirit was called by one on earth from the dead, and made communications respecting the past, the present, and the future. But it may be, that in the last times the upper and the lower, the spiritual and the physical, may more intimately meet. Certainly in the last days there will be superhuman delusions and temptations so great that "if it were possible they would deceive the very elect." But I believe also that in the last days, in the language of Joel, "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." It is therefore highly probable that as the winding up of the great drama in which we play a part draws nearer, the future or the heavenly rest shall come down in clearer manifestation to this world. The Rev. Edward Bickersteth, whose judgment and piety no one can possibly dispute, says: "No part of divine truth"—and I was very much struck with this, and it very much influenced me

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in making these remarks—"no part of divine truth can be neglected without great loss; and it is too evident that the deep and mysterious doctrine of the Bible respecting evil spirits and good angels has been far too much disregarded. It has arisen from the wide spread of infidel principles; and on the other hand, from the unscriptural idolatry practised by the church of Rome, there is a painful prospect," he says, "of a sudden recoil from the present scepticism to an undistinguishing credulity." Dr. Owen, a man of great judgment and piety, says: "It is the height of ingratitude not to search after what may be known of the great privilege of the ministry of angels; God has revealed it; and surely this is not for nothing." Moses Stuart, the eminent American divine, says: "If then there are good angels and evil ones, these facts are important to us; as they both cast light upon God's providential government in the world." But suppose, now, these realities were to be made more tangible; suppose spirits were to come from heaven and communicate flashes of celestial glory to the combatants of Christ upon earth in more visible array; suppose spirits were to come up from "the vasty deep" in order to tempt and to seduce the people of God in greater numbers, are we to fear or to appeal to them for guidance? We are told that Satan will be transformed into an angel of light; that in the last days there shall be signs and wonders such as if it were possible would deceive the very elect; but we are directed at the same time to the decisive test and criterion: "If we," the apostles, "or an angel from heaven"—which assumes that an angel, or a spirit, for it is really not an angel, but a messenger—"if we or a messenger from heaven"—he assumes the possibility of a messenger coming down from heaven—"preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be anathema." If we were to see at this moment burst upon earth all the splendour of a beatific vision; and if an angel radiant with all the glory of the cherubim, which Isaiah saw, and seeing which he fell prostrate at his feet, struck blind, were to appear; and

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if that angel, professing to be from heaven, bright with its glory, and bearing evidence that he had come from heaven, were to tell me that there is another name by which I can be saved than the name of Jesus—I should instantly answer, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." I agree with students of prophecy, that the three great worlds will come closer as the consummation draws nearer. It is possible that the spirits of the departed in heaven may come nearer us, and that the spirits of the lost in hell may also approach us; it is very certain that Satan, transformed into an angel of light, will try to pervert us; that messengers seemingly from heaven will come and preach another gospel. We have a decisive test; no miracle, no power, no splendour, no pretension, that asserts any one thing that is contrary to this blessed book is a messenger from Christ; and if any voice from the heights or from the depths were to bid you believe what is denounced in this inspired book, you need not hesitate nor fear in Christ's strength to rebuke it, and thus repel all the charms and seductions of its eloquence: "Get thee behind me; it is written." The second lesson I draw is very important. The seeking to call down spirits from above to answer curious questions, if not rebuked, is certainly not countenanced in the Bible. Isaiah, viii. 19, speaking of the last days, writes: "And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter," then what is the answer? "Should not a people seek unto their God? shall the living seek to the dead?" And then it is added: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." This, however, is perfectly compatible with what I have tried to show before, that the two worlds are near each other; that the spirits of believers in heaven may see us; that those that have left us are nearer to each of us than we are at this moment to each other; that spirits in glory do know

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our state, our struggles, our difficulties. If so, and if you want to send a wave of blessedness to the eternal sea, to break in music upon those shores that are bright and illuminated for ever, you will send up that wave in fulness and with force by more earnestly consecrating heart, and soul, and body, and spirit to the service of Him who has redeemed us by his blood, and made us kings and priests unto our God. If you wish to gratify those that have preceded you, and I must quote it as a motive because the apostle himself has done so, you must detach your affections more from a world that perishes, and attach them more and more to a world that endureth for ever.

Our creed is a very short and a very simple one—no atoning efficacy but in the blood of Christ; no regenerative power but in the Holy Spirit of God; no rule of faith, or of conduct, but the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation; the cross without a screen; the Bible without a clasp; the way to heaven without an obstruction; and all things the servants of them who are the servants of our God and of his Christ.

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LECTURE XXXIV.

THE BUILDER OF THE TEMPLE AND THE BEARER OF THE GLORY.

THE Author of the work of ages is also the Finisher. He only is the foundation, and he only the top stone. Under his eye and in his strength it rises every day, and therefore

"*He shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory.*"—ZECHARIAH vi. 13.

THIS imagery is allusive. The ancient temple of Jerusalem, in which was the glory that burned between the cherubim, the mercy seat, and all the symbols of a more sensuous economy, expressive then to the Jewish church of those great truths which are now brought clearly to light, is the basis of the theme. Next to his God the temple was the glory of a Jew. When he prayed he turned his face towards it; when he praised he thought of its incense, and its high priest, and its golden altar, and its censer. Whatever act of worship he engaged in, the temple was to him symbolically what the name of Christ is to us. It is not true that the Jew turned to the east when he worshipped, and to suppose that it is the duty of the Christian so to turn in prayer is unscriptural and absurd. The Jew looked to his temple just because in the holy of holies was the symbol, and the type, and the representative memorial of Him who is the light that lightens the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel. There only sacrifice was offered; there only incense in the holy place was presented in the golden censer by the high priest of Israel; and from that place, where God had written his name, the Jew expected that his prayers would be

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heard and his praises rise like the morning and the evening incense. But the reason of the Jew's attitude when he prayed was not the thought of a superior sanctity in east, or west, or north, or south, but because he recognized in that temple the symbol and the type of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There were three great temple functions which the high priest had to fulfil, each of which was an eloquent and expressive prophecy of our great High Priest, the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners. First, the high priest offered an atoning sacrificial bleeding victim on the brazen altar that was without, first for the sins of himself, and next for the sins of all the children of Israel. Without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins; every Jew felt that without a sacrifice there was no salvation. Therefore the high priest, the representative person of the Jews, offered up a sacrifice of an animal, whose blood was shed, whose flesh was burnt on the brass altar outside, an atonement for Israel. Our great High Priest by one offering hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. As the apostle Paul says, he suffered without the gate, bearing the sins of all his people; and it was true of him, what could not be said of any priest that preceded, or of any victim that was offered: "His blood cleanseth from all sin." We have thus a perfect sacrifice, offered by a perfect Priest, on a perfect altar, incapable of addition, once for all, available for every sin of every human being in every nation, latitude, and longitude throughout the wide world, and from the commencement of this world to its very close.

Secondly, when the high priest had offered the sacrifice upon the brazen altar which was without, he passed into the holy of holies, as we might call it, the chancel of that magnificent cathedral, the temple of Jerusalem. Having finished the atonement on the altar of brass, he went into the holy place, into which no human being was permitted to go except the high priest, and in the light of the overwhelming glory, in the presence of the overshadowing cherubim beside the mercy seat, in

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which was the law, the high priest, bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven on his breastplate, offered up incense and intercessory prayers for the happiness, the safety, the prosperity of Israel. Here also we have a type of the second act of the Lord Jesus Christ, our High Priest. He having died a sacrifice upon the cross on Calvary, as the apostle says, having suffered without the gate—after he had finished that sacrifice, and when finished, by rising from the dead, not the victim of the grave, but its vanquisher, ascended into the true holy place, that is, heaven, where, says the apostle, "he ever liveth to make intercession for us." But just as the high priest of old had the names of the twelve tribes engraven on his breastplate, our great High Priest has the names not of nations, tribes, churches, but of individuals, however humble, engraven in his memory, impressed upon his heart, acceptable to God through the incense of his eternal and glorious intercession; and therefore "he," it is said by the apostle, "ever liveth to make intercession for us." He knows the trials that beset us without; he knows the temptations that gnaw and trouble the heart within; he is able to succour, because he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities: "he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust." To every Christian that great High Priest who is in the holy of holies not made with hands, says: "Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have thee that he may sift thee as wheat, but I have prayed for thee"—I have anticipated him—"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

The third act of the high priest in this ancient temple is that which our Lord has not yet performed. After he had remained in the holy of holies interceding for the people—the people meanwhile standing in waiting and surging multitudes outside—the high priest came forth from the holy place, having offered intercession, and lifted up his hands and pronounced upon the people that blessing which Aaron was commanded to pronounce upon the people: "The Lord bless you

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and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace." Our attitude at this moment is that of waiting till the High Priest come forth from the true holy place to pronounce a benediction upon the whole heaven and earth. Christ has finished the atonement on the cross, that can neither be added to nor repeated; Christ now intercedes in the sanctuary within, ever living, and ever able, and ever willing to make intercession for us; and the solemn attitude of all Christendom, so far as Christendom is enlightened in the knowledge of the Word of God, and indeed of all nature, is that of waiting outside till our High Priest come down from the holy of holies and pronounce a benediction that will descend into nature's deepest depths; that will rise up to creation's loftiest heights; that will transfigure the living that then live, and raise the dead from the sleep of ages, and dismiss death, and sickness, and sorrow, and tears, and make the last two chapters of the Apocalypse no longer a prophecy that we pray may speedily be fulfilled, but an actual history of an actual scene that we shall live and rejoice to witness. We have thus before us the figurative meaning of the high priest in the temple of old.

This temple was typical of a nobler, a grander, and a better one. What is that nobler, grander, and better temple, of which this was the dim and the imperfect prefiguration? The ancient temple is now in ruins. The Saviour himself predicted of it, as a threat as well as a prophecy, that not one stone should be left upon another that should not be cast down. One stone, measuring about ten cubits, or fifteen feet, in length, and a good many feet in breadth and thickness, remains, demonstrably a fragment of the ancient temple of Solomon. And that stone, as if the Jew in his depression would not let go from his heart the hope of his restoration, it is recorded by travellers who have visited Jerusalem, is worn half through by the application of the lips of Jews from all parts of the world that come

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and kiss it; and whilst they kiss the crumbling stone repeat the words of the beautiful Psalm: "Thy saints take pleasure in the stones of Jerusalem; her very dust is dear to them." This temple has passed away, and the Mosque of Omar has been built upon its ruins. Just where the Cross should have all its supremacy the Crescent predominates; where David's sublime Psalms rose the Muezzin proclaims his creed—a strange voice is heard where the glory was, where God dwelt, "There is one God, and Mahomet is his prophet;" words transient and rapidly dying out, that a voice more glorious and magnificent may come forth, and in the words of a hymn which English Christians frequently sing—

"Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all."

But what is the nature of this temple which takes the place of the ancient temple of Jerusalem? It is described by Peter, the most satisfactory witness, and the less likely to be impeached by those who suppose him to have been—without the least idea in his own mind of having been made so—the foundation stone of this temple. Peter says: "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." And then he says this is the fulfilment of a prophecy: "Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Parallel to this is that passage which has been very much misinterpreted and misunderstood, in the 16th of Matthew. Peter answered first, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." And then he adds, "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." An unfortunate mistake is made by confounding two words which are perfectly distinct

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It is a great pity that our translators have rendered it, "Thou art Peter;" it ought not to have been so rendered; there is no connexion in it. Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of God. Jesus then says to him, "Thou art Peter." There is no appropriateness in this; but the word which is translated Peter is πετρος, which means "a stone." This guides us to the way in which it ought to have been translated: "Thou art a stone, and upon this Rock, which you have just now confessed to be the Son of the living God, I will build my church." What is my church? The collection of such living stones as Peter was. "Ye as living stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood." And it appears the clearer by our recollecting that the two Greek words in this passage are totally distinct. It is in the original, "thou art a stone," πετρος; "and upon this πετρᾳ, the rock which thou hast confessed, I will build my church." It is all beauty and consistency in the original: "Thou art a stone, a living stone, and upon this, the rock"—what rock? the everlasting Rock which you have confessed to be the Son of the living God—"I will build the living stones, the living Peters, such as you are, and the gates of hell"—which have prevailed against the Temple of Solomon, and raised the Mosque of Omar over its ruins—"shall not prevail against this, the temple of God." Now nothing can be plainer or more beautiful than this. I have searched out and have collected from Greek writers illustrations of the distinct meaning of these words. In the vast majority of instances, πετρος, the word applied to Peter, "Thou art a stone," means a little stone; something that can be lifted, something that can be thrown by the hand. In the Septuagint and New Testament it always means a stone. One Greek writer uses the phrase, "to be stoned with stones," πετροίσιν; stones that a person can throw and strike another with. Again, we read in Homer of νιφας πετρων, "shower of stones," that is, small stones. But the Greek word πετρα, wherever it is employed, as far as I know, is used to denote an imbedded, solid, massive

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rock. For instance, one writer speaks of the ship's being thrown, επι ταις πετραις, "upon the rocks;" and again he speaks of the army finding water, εν γλαφυρη πετρα, "in a hollow rock," where the word means a massive, imbedded, solid, immovable rock. If the Saviour had meant to teach that the church should be built on Peter, he would have said συ ει πετρος και επι τουτῳ τῳ πετρῳ, &c.; therefore he says to Peter, "Thou art a stone," a very precious stone, a living stone, but still a stone; "and not upon thee, the stone, but upon me, the rock that you have confessed, I will build the την εκκλησιαν, which is the collection or aggregate of living stones, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Augustine represents the Saviour saying, Super Me edificabo te, non super te.

Thus we have that true temple that succeeds the temple that has passed away, and as its first and its most distinctive characteristic it is composed of living stones, not dead and perishable materials. These stones are found in the quarry, cold, dead, lifeless; they are selected by the Master Builder of the church; they are quickened by his celestial breath; they are made living stones by his almighty power; they are placed in rows and tiers of perfection and beauty in the massive edifice that he is building, till it will be said in the end what is now said of its progress: "Ye are all built living stones on Christ the Rock of Ages, a living temple, whose builder and whose maker is God." Such are the component parts of that edifice which has Christ, the Rock of Ages, and him alone, for its foundation.

This church, thus built of living stones, laid upon Christ the living Rock, is the one catholic, apostolic, holy church of the Lord Jesus Christ. The holy catholic, apostolic church is not the signature of a sect, but the distinctive name of that church which is composed of living stones, laid upon the Son of God, the Rock of Ages. The floor of this church is sand, and rock, and green trees, and flower, and river, and sea; the whole earth is its variegated and its beautiful floor; its high altar is the Son

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of God; its roof the majesty of Deity. The cement that knits its living stones each to the other, and all to the Rock of Ages, is the cement of eternal, inexhaustible, imperishable love. And in this temple, because the whole earth is its floor, and the whole sky is its dome, and wherever Christ's name is named is its consecration, and wherever three people are gathered together in his name, there the High Priest is present in the midst of them. In this catholic, apostolic church the evening song no sooner dies in the west than it is wakened by the myriads of living voices that take it up in the east. There is daily service in this church; a ceaseless anthem; prayer that never ends. We enter on the shades of night; at the Antipodes they are just beginning their morning prayers at the dawn of day; and again in other parts it will be mid-day, in other parts it will be the forenoon. And thus over all the floor of this grand cathedral—a floor variegated as the surface of the earth—there are worshippers ever kneeling, ever praying, ever praising; so that the anthem never ceases, the service is never at an end, the sacred sanctuary of the world-wide temple is never empty of worshippers.

This holy catholic and apostolic church is God's special dwelling-place. He speaks of the ancient temple in such words as these: "Here will I dwell." David calls it the palace of the great King. In this holy catholic, apostolic church the High Priest walks at morning, and noon, and night; watches the golden candlesticks; pours oil into the lamps ever as it is exhausted; speaks to each worshipper a word of peace, bringing into each heart an inspiration of strength; and is ever present where two or three are gathered on its consecrated floor. What are all the denominations of true believers? We speak in this imperfect economy of those most imperfect things, denominations, sects; but after all, what are they? On the continent of Europe the true religion is most minutely caricatured; so much so that if you want to understand the Roman Catholic system you must first understand what the millennial church

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is. The high priest first sacrifices, then he intercedes, then he comes out and blesses the people. The Pope assumes to be a sacrificing priest, offers sacrifice; next intercession in his holy place; and lastly he comes out to the western window of St. Peter's once a year, and lifts up his hands—æsthetically looked at, a sublime and magnificent spectacle; religiously and morally looked at, a caricature, an attempt to anticipate and supersede what will take place at the commencement of the millennial day, when our High Priest comes down from his holy place and pronounces a benediction that, unlike that of the Pope, will have power, and efficacy, and effect. On the continent of Europe I have noticed, at Amiens, at Antwerp, and other chief cathedrals, what are called side chapels; each side chapel has often a distinct service, a priest officiating in each, and people kneeling in some act of devotion to the patron saint or saintess supposed to preside over it and to give it its name. What are denominations with us? Just the side chapels of this holy, catholic, apostolic, glorious, living church, all of them worshipping on the same floor; all beneath the roof of the same majestic cathedral; all joining in the same anthem strain; all giving the glory, and the honour, and the thanksgiving, and the praise, not as in Europe's side chapels, to the Virgin, to St. Peter, to St. Paul, but in different dialects of the same catholic tongue, in different side chapels of the same grand cathedral, under the same roof, on the same consecrated floor, in the universal strain: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honour, and glory, and riches, and power, for he was slain for us." Here then is the true idea of the church universal.

This is the only church in which there is salvation. We can say of this everything that the Tractarian and the Roman Catholic say of their respective systems. They hold a great truth, only they localise and sectarianise what is not catholic. Hence we say there is no salvation out of this church; but what church? The aggregate of living stones. If you be a living stone you are a churchman; if you are not a living stone it does

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not matter who absolves you, nor to what communion you belong; you do not belong to that holy, catholic, and apostolic church whose foundation is the Rock of Ages, whose walls are made up of living stones, whose high altar is the Son of God, whose majestic roof is the omnipotence of the Eternal, in which there is ceaseless song, and the floor of which is coextensive with the surface of the whole globe.

Of this church Christ shall bear the glory, as the builder as well as the foundation. It seems strange that he should be the foundation of it, that he should be the builder of it, and lastly, that he should be the top stone of it. But we apply to Christ words that can be applied to none besides. He is all and in all, because he is God as well as man; he is alike the foundation and the top stone, the Alpha and the Omega; the builder of it, the altar, and the glory in the midst of it. First of all he devised and laid down in all the minute specifications the great and glorious plan of a house not made with hands; his wisdom alone sketched the plan. He purchased every stone with his precious blood, so that we can say to every living stone, that is, every living Christian, "Ye have been bought not with gold, nor silver, nor any corruptible thing, but with the precious blood of a Lamb without spot and without blemish." He fixes every stone in the place that fits it, and just where it should be placed. Christians often complain that they are not where they would be. If you were where you would be your ruin perhaps would be irretrievable. You have to thank God, the only Founder of the church, the great Builder of the cathedral, that he selects you, that he quickens you, and places you where you ought to be, and nowhere else. Thank God, then, that if he has not made you a buttress, or a carved and decorated ornament, he has made you a hidden living stone in that glorious cathedral. The place of beauty, the place of honour, would not be expedient for you, or you would be there; but the place of safety is eternally yours, because you are a living stone, however hidden, chosen in Christ before the

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foundation of the world, and selected by him to be part and parcel of that grand fabric that advances every day amid rising and setting suns, and over which one day—and it may be very soon—there will ring from heaven the angels' shout: "Grace, grace unto it." What is affliction? what is poverty? what is sickness? what is the loss of those that you love? It is God shaping a living stone for the place he means you to occupy for ever, and it is just as necessary for you as that he should have chosen you. Those jewels that are the most precious need the most of the workman's skill and the longest application of the workman's tools in order to polish them; and those in this church universal, the stones in this magnificent cathedral, that are most afflicted and tried are the most precious. God is polishing you either to be a gem to sparkle in his everlasting diadem, or to be a stone exalted in that fabric which he is filling with his glory, which he has sketched in his word, and the foundations of which are those of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Finally, he will lay upon this edifice the top stone itself; the prophet tells us so; he will lay on it the top stone, and the voice will be heard: "Grace, grace unto it." Perhaps that applied to the ancient temple; but a voice more majestic will ring from earth to heaven, and return in musical reverberations from heaven to earth, not "Grace, grace unto it," but the voice of a great multitude that no man can number, "as the voice of many waters." What a noble thought! Have you ever stood upon the beach or upon the pier, when the sea has been smitten by the huge tempest? What a rolling magnificence, what a glorious sound is in the noise of the ocean when its waves, like white-robed choristers, lift up their voices and praise Him who made the sea and the dry land, and underneath is that deep, rolling boom, to listen to which as we sleep by the seaside is one of the greatest charms, I think, in the world! There will be a voice like the noise of many waves, like the noise of the great sea, and like the noise of

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mighty thunders, saying, "Hallelujah, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

He who is thus the foundation of the temple, who thus builds the temple, shall also bear the glory of it. Here is a great truth that anathematises the habit and the practice of the visible church upon earth, of calling its sections by distinctive names. The names Calvinist, Lutheran, Wesleyan, are most objectionable in themselves; they are, as far as those names go, like the side chapels in the Roman Catholic cathedrals, each dedicated to a saint, instead of each dedicated to God. I do not mean to say that those who retain those names give worship to those that founded them: God forbid! Some of the noblest and most devoted Christians are to be found in each. But it is a defect that we should write upon a single side chapel, John Wesley, just as it is a defect that you should write up St. Peter's Chapel, or Mary's Chapel, or call them by any name than that name which ought to supersede and to extinguish by its glory every name—the name to which every knee shall bow, the name which every tongue shall one day confess. Then Christ shall bear all the glory of this church; this apostolic, this catholic church; this grander temple than the world ever saw; this more glorious collection of precious stones than coronet or kingly crown ever had. Christ shall have all the glory of its plan, all the glory of its device, all the glory of its original magnificent conception. He shall bear the glory also of its progress. We often think that we are building this church, and there is a sense in which we are. The apostle Paul calls himself an under-builder; we are builders; every Christian who teaches in a ragged school or a Sunday school, who distributes a tract or a Bible, who visits the poor, the sick, and the ignorant, and tries to teach them, is so far building, helping Christ to build. "We are," says the apostle, "fellow-workers with Christ." What an honour to be asked to contribute a single shilling to Christ's cause! What an honour to be allowed to contribute to remove the rubbish that conceals some stone in the quarry, that the breath and the

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sunshine of heaven may settle upon it and quicken it into immortal life! It is happiness as well as honour. Do not give as a penance, do not give as a duty, do not give because there is a twinge of conscience, but give because it is a noble privilege to contribute even a halfpenny to the completion and the perfection of that glorious edifice in which I trust you are living stones as well as under-workmen. Christ has all the glory of its progress. Obstructions will be melted into contributions; oppositions will be changed into impulses. When we look abroad upon the world we see some willing and consecrated under-builders of the glorious edifice; but there are others not so. The King of Italy, the Pope of Rome, the Emperor of the French, the Emperor of Austria, the Emperor of Russia, are merely men clearing away the rubbish that conceals the living stones, that God's breath may touch them and God's sunshine may warm them, and that thus may be expedited the completion and the perfection of that glorious edifice of the progress of which Christ alone shall have all the glory. He will have all the glory not only of its progress, but of its worship. The name that should overspread it should be the name of Christ alone. Churches should not be called after saints. What we call churches or side chapels should never be called after saints—neither St. Peter's Church, nor St. John's Church, nor St. Paul's Church, nor St. Andrew's Church; they ought to be called Trinity Church, Christ's Church—such only are sublime, and sacred, and noble names. In this grand edifice, whose variegated floor is sand, and rock, and soil, and grass, and flower—in this grand cathedral, whose alone foundation is the Rock of Ages, whose high altar is the Son of God, whose High Priest walks amid its golden candlesticks perpetually—in its praises Christ alone should be the key-note, in its prayers Christ's name alone should be the pass-word; when we gather together, it should be in his name; when we baptize, in his name only; and when we come to the Lord's table, we come not to join a sect, nor to ally ourselves with a

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chapel, but to do this in remembrance of him only. Let Christ, therefore, in baptism, in the Lord's Supper, in our prayers, and in our praises, have all the glory in this sublime cathedral, this perfect sanctuary, this church of the living God. Lastly, he will have all the praise of its completion. It has risen slowly; during eighteen hundred years it has been growing, and it has been literally true no weapon formed against it has prospered. In the place where Rousseau wrote his sensual, infidel works there is a department of the Bible Society. In places where Romanism was supreme, Protestant truth now, in Italy and France, is preached in all its fulness. In every instance the wrath of man has been overruled to praise him; and the gates of hell, however hard they have pressed, have not prevailed against it. All his love, all his power, all his promises, all his faithfulness, all his honour, are mortgaged to the completion, and the perfection, and the perfect splendour of that edifice which will supersede all past temples, and be the glory and the ornament of all. At last the scaffolding of this grand cathedral shall be removed. What is the Lord's supper? scaffolding; what is baptism? scaffolding; what are all our arrangements, whether they be denominational or otherwise? just scaffolding. Well, when all the scaffolding is removed, and the splendid edifice is seen in all its perfection and its proportions, what a hymn will be sung by ten thousand times ten thousand voices! what a glory will flash then from its every tower, and pinnacle, and stone, and shrine, and altar! But I need not describe it; the specification, the splendour, the beauty, the perfection of it, are spoken of in language so fine that the very reading of it sounds like one of Handel's strains, the very words seem notes, and the whole chapter massive and magnificent harmony: "The building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chal-

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cedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst." I have often said precious stones are the broken fragments of ancient Paradise. At that explosion of which our sin was the igniting spark, these precious stones were broken into fragments. Admired by kingly eyes, and worn in kingly crowns, they are bits of Paradise; and hence there are two things on earth excessively beautiful and lovely—the flowers that come forth in summer, and precious stones. These are permanent flowers; amaranthine blossoms; they do not fade, they are always beautiful. Why should not women wear these? They are the most beautiful remains of Eden; they are almost sacred; they will be part of the future glory. Your adorning, says Peter, is not to be these things. He does not forbid the use of these things, he only says these things are not to be your glory, nor to be your chief ornament; you are to look higher than these—to the ornament of a meek, and a quiet, and a gentle spirit. Precious stones remind me of Paradise that was, and prophesy to me of this more beautiful cathedral that will be. God has selected these to be the foundations of that grand cathedral whose founder, whose builder, whose glory, whose high altar is Christ. In language most magnificent, language that one never wearies reading: "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Then what an exquisite thought is that: "And God"—when he shall bring forth the top stone, when the edifice shall be completed, and this world lasts till the last living stone has been quickened and laid upon Christ the foundation stone—"shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former

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things are passed away. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever." Grand cathedral! glorious edifice! in every light worthy of Him who bears its glory! It is meet, it is essential, it ought to be your prayer, that you should find a place in it. Let me ask, are you living stones? Have your hearts been quickened by the warmth of celestial sunshine? Have you been taken out of the cold, dead, shattered quarry of this present cold, miserable, fallen earth, and feel you in your hearts something of the temperature of the sky? Is your worship the adoration of that spotless Lamb? Are there in your hopes the expectation of standing before Him who has redeemed you by his blood, and praising and adoring Him for ever and ever? What are all our local churches? what is the edifice in which you worship every Sunday? Just a shed in which the workmen are working with Christ to build up this grand cathedral. What is the noblest cathedral in England, as it is called? A workshop, where stones are being prepared for the great Master Builder, to be fastened into that glorious edifice, living stones in a living cathedral. And what do we on a communion Sunday? We try to bring down from the sunny heights of heaven a little of its sweet sunshine to give us a reminiscence of a glory that has faded, and to give us—blessed be God!—the earnest and the foretaste of a glory that will come again when the top stone shall be He who is the foundation stone, and we shall meet where our songs have no discord, where our prayers have no imperfection, where our service shall never weary, for they serve him day and night without ceasing.

O thou living Rock of Ages, make each of us a living stone in thine own sublime edifice, and thou shalt bear the glory! Amen.

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LECTURE XXXV.

THE LAST AND PERFECT EXHIBITION.

THIS year, 1862, the kings and nations of the earth are gathering together to see and admire the treasured glories of art, civilization, and science. It suggests, what is rather contrast than comparison, the descent from heaven of the city of God—the palace of the earth—to set forth the glory of which heaven and earth contribute their united riches and splendours.

" *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh*

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abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."—REVELATION xxi. 18–xxii. 5.

THE apocalyptic picture suggests, by way of contrast, the evanescence of all that is an approximation to it. Man tries to imitate the heavenly, but his brightest and most beautiful approximation is only a splendid failure. What man attempts upon the earth is evidence of yearnings in his soul after a perfection, a beauty, a glory which this world cannot furnish. These yearnings are Divine instincts—indomitable instincts, not to be disappointed, but to the utmost gratified when the New Jerusalem shall come down from heaven, and the splendid picture that is here set in prophecy shall be fulfilled in fact, in the world's history, and in the Christian's grateful experience.

Earth has been often the scene of great gatherings. Sometimes men have met in countless hosts to battle; sometimes to celebrate the Olympic games, and races, and wrestlings. Once they came as the Crusaders of old, under the auspices of a Pope, who was foolish enough to consecrate such folly, and at the instigation of Walter the Penniless, and Peter the Hermit, who had nothing better to do, and set out to recover the desolate tomb of a dead Christ, instead of going forth to preach the risen glory of a living and interceding Christ.

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Incidental evils have accompanied all great gatherings; but if there have been incidental evils, as there may be in this great city at this remarkable time, there will be permanent, it may be, everlasting good.

Every such attempt is an effort of man to reach that perfection which was his first destiny; and it is a confession upon man's part that he feels the want of something, and that he is anxious, and that he will labour, if possible, to recover it. The most beautiful painting we look at, the most finished poem we read, the most glorious structure we contemplate, are efforts of man to reach a perfection of which he has vague and inextinguishable recollections; a perfection, too, the very attempt to reach which is not only a prophecy, but an augury of the fulfilment of God's promise, that this air shall not always resound with the tramp of battle-steeds, the roll of the war-drum, and the sound of the clarion, and that this earth shall not always be steeped in tears, and torn with graves—that sick-beds, and sorrows, and crosses shall not always be—that one day, sooner than some imagine, the New Jerusalem will come down from heaven, and the world shall close as the world began, —with Paradise itself.

The prediction of the Book of Revelation describes a descent upon the earth, not an erection upon it. "John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." It did not grow out of the earth like a flower made of the earth's materials, and destined with the earth to decay, but it comes down from heaven. Its origin is heavenly, its destiny is heavenly; its character is therefore essential and unmingled purity. It comes down, it is said, from heaven, and is planted on the earth, and it shall exhibit a glory the very reading of whose record is music. When we listen to one reading these last two chapters of the Apocalypse, it is as if we listened to the sweetest strains of the most majestic oratorio. The thoughts are so magnificent, the language so poetical, that all that Shakspeare wrote, or Milton conceived, sink into insignificance in comparison with these grand

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accents of the son of Zebedee, the fisherman of the lake of Gennesareth: "And I John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven," presenting a glory, a magnificence, a splendour without comparison, as it is without companion.

The reading of it suggests contrast. The Great Exhibition of 1862, beautiful and admired as it may be, is nevertheless full of flaws and imperfections. The rains will pierce it; the winds will find crannies to enter at; decay will touch it; it is liable to a thousand contingencies. An earthquake may gulp it down; the hurricane may sweep it away; a single flash of lightning from God's cloud may leave it, and all its glory, a miserable wreck; a disorderly mob—though there is no reason to anticipate that—may break it up; and decay will lay its ten thousand wasting fingers upon it by-and-by. It was inaugurated by the death of its royal patron and presiding genius, as if to show how great is the contrast between man's best and brightest things and God's enduring work; so that it will have started up to show what man can do, and it will have gone away to tell us that all that man does is evanescent, and that we should look not here, but beyond the stars, for "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" a temple in the skies, a fabric that shall not know decay, that shall endure for ever and ever. The building I have spoken of is doomed to decay; the palace of the age to come shall last for aye. Ruby rocks will be its foundation; the quarried gems of the earth will be its stones; the very dust that lies upon it will be the dust of diamonds; and all there will be perfect as it will be pure. There will be no element of decay; no hostile power from without; its origin is from above; its Guardian will be Omnipotence; its presidency that of the Prince of Peace, and its duration will be eternity!

Have we any hope of being citizens of that no mean city? any prospect of entering into that palace not made with hands, and of admiring what the nations will bring into it—their glory, their magnificence, and

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their riches, throned upon which shall be the Prince of the kings of the earth, whose crown is an everlasting crown, and whose dominion knoweth no end?

This divine creation, this apocalyptic Exhibition on the earth—for it is said to "come down from God out of heaven," and "like unto clear glass"—hath no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it. There will be no obscuring cloud; no overhanging shadow; no exhaling mist; no portion on which bright light shall not shine, and no object that will not bear the brightest light to be concentrated on it. Solomon's temple was a blot in comparison with this; and the most magnificent creation of human genius, the concentrated splendour of all the combined cathedrals of England and of Europe, will only be to this great temple of the universe as the tiny light of the lamp is to the sun's when he shines in his meridian strength.

This great edifice described in the Apocalypse will not be opened with prayer, but with praise. It will be consecrated, not by the presence of an earthly, but by the glory of a heavenly King; and the hymn that shall be sung at the opening of this palace in the skies will not be a prophetic, but an accomplished hallelujah: "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth; and the kingdoms of this world are"—not will be—"become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ." It shall have "no need," we are told, "of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." A sabbath calm shall repose on it perpetually; every acre of it shall be holy, every pulse of every inmate a sabbath bell, every breath fragrance, all sounds music, all scenes beauty, and this earth shall yet be the holy chancel of that grand temple which is composed of the whole universe of God; Christ the High Priest, and we priests and kings to serve and praise him without ceasing. Not a poet's dream is this, but a Christian's hope, guaranteed by the oath and unfailing promise of our God.

It is added, as a characteristic of this future temple

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that "there shall be no night there." Night is used in the Scriptures both in the sense of physical darkness and of moral ignorance, or of both. Now, in that future temple there shall be no night; no dark pall shall be spread on it; none of its inmates shall be ever compelled to leave it; no bird of night shall hover over it; no haze or mist shall conceal its splendours: the Sun of righteousness himself shall shine upon it; but the sun that shines day by day from his meridian throne shall be of no more use, amid the present and immediate splendours of the Fountain from which he is filled, than the glow-worm at noonday, or the farthing candle amid the blaze of the now noontide sun. There shall be no night there, in this sense, that there shall be no need for resting. We cannot do without night now. If it were ceaseless day, this frail machine of ours—this wonderful machinery—this strange mysterious engine—this harp with a thousand strings, would be worn out, wasted, and done up. Night comes with its broad cool shadows, and we lie down to obtain rest for our exhausted limbs, and repose for the over-excited and wrought-up mind; but in that better land, in that great palace not made with hands, we shall never weary examining the glories that the nations bring into it; we shall need no night for the repose of the limbs, or to repair the exhaustion of mind. The body shall be a wing, not a weight to the soul; and on unwearied pinion we shall move from space to space, ever striking out new glories, ever smitten with new admiration, ever giving utterance to new praise, ever magnifying Him who is throned on the riches of all, and to whose glory, and for whose pleasure, all things are and were created. There will also be no night in that better rest, in the sense that there will be no ignorance there. Let any of the uninitiated and unartistic go into the Exhibition of 1862, and look upon the exquisite gems from one quarter, the intricate machinery from another, and the textile fabrics from a third, and he will neither understand their meaning, nor history, nor object, nor how and by whom they were originally made. We have but

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a narrow horizon for our minds to move in; weak eyes to examine, and partial light, or rather, ignorant minds, to bring to bear on the investigation of the subjects submitted to us. And as we walk through this earthly Exhibition, we shall meet with many we do not know, some disposed to plunder us, others willing to help us; many of them men of strange tongues, strange dresses, manners, and habits. But when we shall meet in the House that shall glow in the splendours of an unsetting Sun, all there shall speak their own tongues, but they shall be to our ears only as different dialects of the same catholic tongue. We shall all praise the same God, and we shall be able each to say "Amen" to the praise of all. And those costumes which in this world are so various shall all be exchanged for robes white and clean, washed in the blood of the Lamb; arrayed in which, we shall hold palms of victory in our hands—the mother meeting the babe she lost in infancy; the friend recognizing in the resurrection features the long-severed friend; circles broken up on earth meeting again, and all made happy in the affection of each other, because all are happy in the presence of God and the Lamb. "There shall be no night there."

It is predicted that the gates of it shall not be shut. There will be no thieves to keep without, and there will be no chance of plunder within. No police force will watch that city that hath foundations; no possibility of what is dishonourable or dishonest can be there. But shut gates does not mean defence, or merely not being open for admission. The expression is a classical phrase. "Shut gates" was a declaration of war, and "Open gates" a technical phrase, that proclaimed the existence of peace. And when it is here said that "the gates of it shall not be shut," it simply means that there shall be no warfare, but perfect, perpetual, and pervading peace. How sadly does this contrast with what we now see! Our present festivals of nations, beautiful as they may be, must yet be kept amid battalions of soldiers. What a significant symptom that the era of peace is not come! And men that walk with olive branches

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in their hands, know that the barracks are crowded still with soldiers, lest the very possibility of war might occur to disturb a peace which is conventional, not real; temporary, and by truce, not perpetual, and never to be disturbed. The greatest peace that exists in Europe at the present moment is a peace made up by compact: nations have not gone to rest, they are only bivouacked. Alas! they are ready each for the battle again. In Europe every man stands with his hand on his sword-hilt, or with a lighted match by the cannon, ready for a battle which looms in the distance, the havoc and issue of which no statesman can calculate. All things show that the era and age of peace, real peace, lasting peace, peace passing understanding, is in the future, not here. The gates are still open; the soldier is still a reality; war is still a possibility; but the true way to put an end to war, and to make the army obsolete, is not, as some most foolishly imagine, to refuse the supplies to the Secretary-at-War, but to give men something better to do, something nobler to think upon. You can drive out a bad passion only by bringing a good one to bear on it; and, after all, if bad men were kept from war, they would only enter into something more mischievous. It is only in and from the truths of the Bible that permanent, real peace can be given to the human heart. "Great peace have they that keep thy law."

But it is further added that there shall be no curse there. It seems severe language to employ, but however severe it may seem, it is true that we are all born under the curse. This is our state by nature: the world was cursed when man sinned: the instant that man lost his innocence, creation lost its beauty, its harmony, and its blessing. And that curse is to be seen by an inquisitive mind on every product that shall be exposed as the glory of the earth in the structure referred to. There is not a rare or beautiful product of the forge; there is not an exquisite web or lace wrought with the greatest elaboration of the fingers of skill, that has not seen, in the history of its manufacture, tears, aching fingers, bowed-down backs, ay, and sickness,

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and famine, and consumption, and death! Little do we think, as we contemplate the beautiful creations of skill or masterpieces of art, how many heads have ached, and how many graves have been opened, by the weary and worn-out artists and makers. It needs this to temper our excessive idolatry of these things. The curse rests upon the earth; it rests upon man that walks it; it rests upon all that man does. But in that better state there will be no curse. True, its glory is the purchase of blood, but that blood was shed eighteen hundred years ago, and the agony of Him that shed it was ended when he cried aloud, "It is finished;" and the recollection of the price of glory will not make us mourn, but cause us to praise the love of Him who died to restore forfeited Paradise to man, and lost happiness to the human heart.

It is also added that there shall be no more death: *i. e.*, decay, disease, waste, wear, or tear. Blessed prophecy! "There shall be no more death." The most beautiful creations we can examine in the Exposition of all Nations decay while we look at them. There is rust on the purest gold; there is tarnish on the brightest steel; there is a worm in the loftiest cedar; there is moth in the fairest and most costly robes. The purple of Tyre, and the cunning hands that made it, are all gone; the Phœnician weavers and the artisans of Memphis have all passed away, and nothing but their name is left; the products of the looms of Sidon, and the creations of the workshops of Nineveh, have all disappeared, and the mere memorial remains; the skill, the secrets, and the creations of the artisans that Cambyses brought captives into his country, and whose factories filled the whole valley of the Euphrates, from Nineveh to Persepolis, have perished from the earth; the glory of Venice is gone; the blades of Toledo and of Damascus have ceased to command the admiration of the world; the carved work of Verbruggen, and the lace and embroidery of Brussels and Valenciennes, are fading; Murillo, Raphael, Carlo Dolce and Titian, Praxiteles and Canova, are dead. Death, decomposition,

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decay, are carrying on their processes everywhere, while we are expressing to our neighbours the admiration that we feel as we view these wonderful structures. The Prince Consort, who so successfully arranged the Exhibition of 1851, has not been allowed to see finished that of 1862—God having called him to a house not made with hands. Death rides on the railway, walks amid the glories of the nations, breathes on the brightest, gathers the fairest—graves are his footprints, decay is his work, and disappearance from the earth and forgottenness the experience of all. But in that better rest there shall be no death. Its fairest things will not be its fleetest; its brightest things shall be its longest. Death shall wither no flower there, nor hush one bounding heart, nor leave any traces of his presence. No spider shall weave his web amid the branches, or caterpillar gnaw the leaves of the tree of life; there shall be no interruption of that river of life which makes glad the city of our God, nor one element of sin, decay, death, sorrow, or tears in that New Jerusalem which cometh down from heaven.

It is further added, that "the nations of them that are saved shall bring their glory into it." "The nations of them that are saved," is the characteristic of those that shall be inmates of that better rest. The great assemblage of the nations in 1862 cannot be called an assemblage of the nations that are saved—would to God it could be really called so! They meet, it is true, not for battle, but in peace; and so far it is a contribution towards permanent and lasting peace. But they are the nations, we fear, of some that live in scepticism, of others immersed in superstition, and of others that have no creed, or conscience, or faith, or hope, or holiness of any sort at all. There is wheat, but we fear there will also be many tares. Turk, and Greek, and Syrian, and Russian, from the east; English, Irish, Scotch, German, Portuguese, French, from the west, meet together, not on the ground of a common faith, but on ground we can so far applaud—of a common brotherhood, sympathising with the beautiful which God has made us to

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admire, and with the useful that God has given us to employ. But these nations of them that are saved shall bring their glory into this new palace. At present, the glory of the nations is not true glory; but then the chief glory of the nations will be that which is indeed their glory. Lyons and St. Etienne may bring to London their glory—their silks; Bohemia its glory—its glass; Brussels and Valenciennes what they think their glory—their lace; Prussia its pottery; Italy its beautiful mosaics; Algiers its arms. Each nation brings what it thinks its glory, and perhaps that glory is a foretaste of the true glory that shall be. Is that sixtieth chapter of Isaiah a poet's dream? Is it a mere transcendental prediction? I believe that these glories, these literal glories, will be in that future state. I do not believe there is anything in a beautiful flower inherently evil, or that there is any iniquity in a brilliant gem, or that there is anything of God's curse inseparable from a precious diamond. All this earth wants is, not to have its matter annihilated, or transformed into something airy, visionary, or spiritualized; but to have sin, and its corrosive poison, entirely and utterly purged from it, and to feel the consecrating footsteps of the King of kings upon its bosom, and then its deserts shall rejoice, and its solitary places shall blossom as the rose.

I view it as an instalment of the grand result, as an evidence of man's craving of what is to be, and a hint dropped from the skies, that if man can create so fair, and exquisite, and beautiful a thing by his skill, how beautiful, how bright, how glorious will that palace be not made with hands! and how truly may we lift our affections from the glories that so soon will crumble, the beauty that so soon will fade, and set them upon that house eternal in the heavens—that city that hath foundations—that apocalypse of beauty—that panorama of grandeur—"the New Jerusalem, coming from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

I hail the Exhibition of 1862 as an augury of good. I hail it as a means under God of helping onward the

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victory and the reign of peace. England, America, France, Austria, Spain, have so often met upon the battle-field; so often have brothers drenched the earth with the blood of brothers; that surely that man's heart is not instinct with the noblest feelings of humanity who does not hail a rivalry not of blood—who does not regard with delight a battle-field upon which is heard no sound of clarion or war-drum; on which are seen no "garments rolled in blood," or any of the accompaniments of battle; but where intellect meets intellect, and it is tried, by intellectual weapons and intellectual strength, which nation is greatest in art, in science, in literature, and in civilization. And, O blessed triumph! if it shall come out that this Old England of ours, this Great Britain of ours, is the nation that is great in arms, great in science, great in the arts, great in literature, because, what is greater than all, great in the knowledge and the love of God, in sympathy with man, in all that elevates, ennobles, and adorns the character of mankind.

We have no evidence in prophecy that this tenth kingdom that broke from the apostacy ever joined the remaining nine, and if so, it does not come under their curse. And if it does not come under their curse, it may be long reserved for this beautiful gem of ours upon the bosom of the vast ocean to be that land in which freedom finds its firmest footing, humanity its ablest champion, and religion its lasting and most enduring altar. All things lead me to this conclusion. I will not augur evil while there are so many omens of bright and blessed results.

Our title to that house not made with hands, to that city that hath foundations, is not what the Bank of England or the Queen of England can give. The Bank of England can make a rich man; the Queen of England can make a Duke; but God alone can make a Christian. And that title of which the whole Bible is full—the righteousness of God our Saviour—is the only thing we can present that will admit us into that "house not made with hands, eternal in the

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heavens." Have we it? If, standing in Piccadilly, and looking on the vast crowds that rush past day after day to see the glories the nations bring into that mundane edifice, I were to ask any person, "Who are these, and whence came they?" I should be answered, "These are French, Germans, Chinese, Austrians, Indians, that have come from west and east, and north and south." But when that grand group shall stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb—that mighty multitude composed of all nations, and kindreds, and tribes, and tongues—and when it shall be asked by some of the inquiring angels, struck by the sight of these immigrants and colonists who are not natives—for angels alone are natives—and startled by the beauty, and glory, and magnificence of that mighty crowd, "Who are these, and whence came they?" the answer shall not be, "These are French, Germans, Spaniards, Chinese, or Turks;" nor shall it be, "These are Churchmen, or Dissenters; Scotch Churchmen, English Churchmen, Free Church, or some other Church;" but it will be said, as if to pour contempt upon our paltry and perishable distinctions: "These are they that have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore are they in that palace, and stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb; and serve him day and night without ceasing."

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LECTURE XXXVI.

THE THRONED LAMB.

THE inspiration of the songs of the saved is sacrifice—the cross and the crown, the shadow and the sunshine, the suffering and the glory, are inseparable for ever.

"*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*"—REVELATION v. 12.

IT is worthy of notice that in the commencement of the sublime paragraph from which my theme is taken no man was found able to unroll the sealed and mysterious record of things that were to come till one said to John: "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." Then John casts his eye across the waves of the Ægean Sea; and, "lo, in the midst of the throne"—which was part of the grand panorama that swept before him—"and of the four beasts"—or four living creatures—"and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain"—the Greek being, "stood a Lamb as if it had been that very moment offered up in sacrifice"—"having seven horns"—the symbols of power—"and seven eyes"—the symbols of omniscience—"which are the seven Spirits of God"—the one perfect Spirit—"sent forth into all the earth." John not only sees, but hears: "And when he had taken the book, the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours"—or perfumes, or rather incense—"which are the prayers of saints"—the prayers offered by themselves as saints, and thus presented unto God. "And they sung a new song,

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saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth;" when the earth shall be restored and enjoy its millennial rest. "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

First of all, let me attempt to answer the question why the Redeemer is constantly set forth in the sacred record as the Lamb. We find the first explanation of this name in a now exhausted institution of Levi. Every morning and evening a lamb was taken and slain in the public place appointed for the purpose as the morning and the evening sacrifice. By the one, all the sins of the day were typically forgiven; by the other, all the sins of the night were typically washed out, expiated, and put away. Hence when Jesus appeared in Jerusalem on that day, evidently at the hour of the evening sacrifice, John seeing his approach, calls out to the Jews: "Behold the Lamb;" as much as to say, That lamb that you are now leading dumb to sacrifice will now cease to be offered; its significance is exhausted; the symbol must be broken up; the true Lamb comes to take the place of the typical lamb; what the one did symbolically the other does really; turn your backs upon the ancient institution, and now and henceforth rivet your hearts' hopes upon the La of God, that taketh away the sins of the w Secondly, there was in the institutions of ancient what was called the passover lamb. The story o memorable night we know well, and no doubt drawn many a comforting thought from it. It is on a memorable night the first-born of Egypt, fro first-born of Pharaoh on the throne to the first-bor

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the meanest of his subjects, were doomed of God to be stricken, in just retribution for a nation's crimes, in that it persisted in preventing a great purpose being fulfilled, the exodus of the children of Israel. But it came to pass by Divine appointment that every house on the lintels and the door-posts of which there was sprinkled a little blood, by a piece of hyssop dipped in the blood of a lamb slain by that household on that very night, the angel, as he rushed through Egypt with outspread wing and bated breath, wherever his eye saw blood sprinkled on the lintel, there sacredly stood aloof; for he had no mission to touch the hair of the head of the humblest inmate of that home. But where there was no sprinkling of blood upon the door-posts, there he entered, breathed in the face of the first-born, and the flower faded, and the strong man drooped, and there was wailing and lamentation that night in Egypt. We are told by an apostle: "Christ our passover," our passover Lamb, "is sacrificed for us." What does that teach us? That the safety of the sinner's soul this day is in that blood shed 1800 years ago, which is the life; sprinkled not upon the book, nor upon the pew, nor upon the homestead, but by faith upon the heart; and in its innermost recesses trusted in, and cherished, and felt to be the reason why God can remain the infinitely holy, the infinitely just, the infinitely true, and yet admit the wickedest and the worst of mankind to all the riches of grace and all the inheritance of glory. The safety of a Christian is not injured by the weakness of his faith. I hear Christians say, My faith often gives way, and I sometimes doubt, and hesitate, and begin to think it is all up with me; there is no Christianity about me; I have no hope at all. But still there is a background, notwithstanding this confession, on which the eye of another can clearly read faith and trust, and life, and love notwithstanding. That weak faith shatters your comfort, but does not shake your safety. No doubt, when the father on the lintels of whose home the blood was sprinkled heard the rush of the angel's wing, and the wild wail of sorrow that burst from a hundred

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neighbouring homes as the first-born was stricken down, he must have trembled; no doubt he clasped his youngest and his only boy more warmly to his heart, as if he could shield him with his strong arms from impending death, fearing the angel might enter and strike there. But the fainting confidence of the father in the protecting efficacy of the blood did not in the least affect his safety. The angel did not say, Is there a weak trust inside this house, and a strong trust inside that? but, Is the blood upon the lintels and the door-posts? So when God takes inspection of the condition of his church, he sees weak faith with less comfort, strong faith with more comfort, but weak faith and strong faith equally secure; not because the one is so strong, but because in spite of the wavering of the other the blood of sprinkling is on the heart, and trusted in and gloried in there. Then do not think when your faith shakes your Christianity is done for; do not suppose when a leaf falls that the forests are all to be swept away; do not think when a pebble drops that thrones and principalities are upset; do not argue because your faith is weak that the blood of Christ has lost its efficacy, or that the promises of God have no more faithfulness and truth.

Let me turn to this word as it is used in the 53rd of Isaiah, where he describes the Redeemer thus: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." The trait I notice here is, he was dumb; in the words of the Gospel, he answered not a word. Why? There was no plea on the lips of Jesus for escape from the curse which smote him, because he knew that the tainted, and torn, and polluted fleece of all the stray sheep of this world was upon him, and that he came into the world to suffer and to die; and he knew the sea of agony which he had to sound and wade through in order to reach the shore; he knew the fire he had to pass through in order to deliver the victim that would otherwise be consumed; and therefore he was dumb. He asked not to escape; the cords that

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knit him to a cross were composed of his own infinite love. It was because he loved us, and would save us in spite of ourselves, in spite of our unworthiness, that he was dumb, that he said nothing for himself, everything for you and me, and the chiefest of sinners. I turn to the apostle Peter, who describes the same precious Saviour in other words, but using the name given in the Apocalypse, where he says: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold." All the gold and silver buried in the earth in its unpenetrated mines, or struck and sent into currency, could not buy off from ruin one single soul: "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Now why should Peter say, "without blemish and without spot?" It is to call attention to the remarkable phenomenon that the only innocent being, the only blameless and spotless being that ever breathed our air, trod upon our globe, or mingled with the current of our race, was the greatest, by far the greatest sufferer that ever passed through our world. This phenomenon is so striking, so remarkable, that it is inexplicable except upon the hypothesis that he suffered, but not for himself. It would be as great an incongruity that innocence should suffer and die as that Judas Iscariot should be admitted into heaven and be happy for ever. The law of God's universe is—perfect innocence is life, happiness, joy, peace, infinite and eternal; and sin is misery, remorse, ruin, death infinite, eternal. If Jesus was what Pilate said he was, what Satan even said he was, what the voice from heaven said he was, what every word he spoke, every deed he did, every step he took, every blessing he left, demonstrated that he was—holy, harmless, undefiled—I ask the rationalist, I ask those who explain away the distinctive doctrines of the Gospel, why was he so great a sufferer? If you could prove to me that Jesus' death was not expiatory and atoning, I can prove to you that there is not a just, a holy, a righteous God in heaven. But the explanation is given that meets the case pre-

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cisely: "On him were laid the iniquities of us all;" he bore our sins; and in every record that we have of the tears he wept, of the loneliness he felt—and there was a loneliness in the Saviour unspeakable, for he had no one that could understand him upon earth, or sympathize with him, or enter into the depths and recesses of his heart—let us ever remember it was not the sin of the Jew; it was not the sin of the Gentile; it was my sin and your sin that were expiated there; and because of that tragedy of sorrow and sacrifice on the cross our sins are blotted out and forgiven. I do not mean that God hates us, and is compelled to forgive us because Christ died; that is a monstrous error; there is no sense, and no Scripture, and no meaning in it; but it is this—God loved us before Christ died just as he loves us now; only as the just ruler of the universe he could not treat sin as he could treat holiness; he could not make heaven a congeries of all that was wicked, and defiled, and evil, and polluted, as well as all that was holy and spotless. I have seen a judge condemn a prisoner to death, and weep while he condemned him. You know that those in authority and influence are obliged to do things while personally and individually their hearts almost break to bursting. Why? Because the higher interests of the country, the higher interests of justice, of righteousness and truth demand it. So it was here: Christ died not to make God love us; but he died because God did so love us; and he died with God so loving us in order that through that act of his, those sufferings which we deserved as sinners, that obedience which we could not render as creatures, God might be what the apostle says, just while he justifies the chiefest of sinners. Such was the character of Christ as set forth by Peter.

I turn to the Apocalypse, and I see the picture still presented, in a purer and serener light, and on a loftier and more majestic platform. John says he saw before him in the grand panorama the successive sections of which he saw on Patmos, first of all a Lamb, "just as if he had been that very moment killed in sacri-

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fice." What is the idea meant to be conveyed by this? That the memorials of Calvary shine the most conspicuous and splendid amidst the glories of the throne; that what Jesus endured on the cross he has carried up the living reminiscence of into glory; and that the most wonderful scene amidst splendours of which we can form no conception, and which poetic genius must sink when it attempts to describe, the grandest, the noblest, the most glorious of all, is a Lamb just as if he had been slain in sacrifice for our sins; the crucified seen in heaven in the glorified; the lone weeper in Gethsemane throned and crowned; and ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, casting their crowns in flashing showers before the throne of the Lamb, and not saying, but singing, in songs the majesty and the magnificence of which it is impossible for us to realize, but which God himself has attempted to set forth in these striking words: "The voice of a great multitude, the voice of many waters, the voice of many thunders, saying, Alleluia, the Lord God omnipotent reigneth;" or as it is here: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." One can conceive much of that magnificent composition, the Messiah, by Handel, perpetuated even in the realms of glory. We may form an idea from hearing the Hallelujah Chorus what it must be when they that sing are not a handful in a room, but a mighty multitude that no man can number, without a failing heart, without a faltering voice, without discord; each unloading the deep debt of gratitude that lies upon his heart, and expressing the intense love that has been created there. Oh, what a magnificent roll will that be, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great multitude; and as if that were not enough to express it, as the peal of the reverberating thunder that rolls from hill to hill, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" But the thought which John specially

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brings before us in that beautiful sketch is that all that was on the cross is perpetuated amid all the splendours of the throne. The tears he wept are there, sparkling in the unsetting sunshine; the wounds he received are there—if one might use the words of the secular poet, these dumb wounds, eloquent with the records of no mean or transient victory—the hands that were nailed to the cross for us wield the sceptre of the universe. How amazed will many be to see that He they beheld upon the streets of Jerusalem an outcast, forlorn, solitary man, is now, and was then, and will be for ever and for ever God, the Ruler of the universe, the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, the Father of the age to come.

John saw in the vision which swept past him on the Ægean that all creatures in heaven or on earth worshipped and adored the Lamb; the living creatures fell down before the Lamb, and said: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain;" others said: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory, and honour, and dominion for ever and ever." If Jesus be not God, explain to me the worship, if you can. If Jesus be not Deity in its most absolute sense, the worship of the age to come, whether here or elsewhere, must be blasphemy. But who can doubt that he is so? And if all the redeemed in heaven worship him, surely, surely, we should not refuse to do so. There may be Unitarians in heaven, but they left their Unitarianism behind them upon earth. We exclude none; all are welcome; but they are welcome through faith in a perfect sacrifice; and they are admitted only where the worship is given to Him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood. But there is another part of this picture which is worth referring to; it is this—that one who looked at the procession as it was passing upward was so struck with the novelty of the scene that he said: "Who can these be? who are these?" And one answered him, and said: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

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This great multitude were those that came out of great tribulation; they were sinners, and they washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. Now just try, if you can, for one moment to cast a glance into this chancel of the great cathedral of the universe in which these holy and rejoicing worshippers are. Whom do we see? I see there Peter, who denied three times with an oath that he knew him. I see there, too, Paul, who persecuted and murdered the worshippers of Jesus. I see there Mary Magdalene, and the woman caught in sin, and the thief that hung beside him on the accursed tree. Why are they there? How can such persons be admitted there? What business have they there? How do you explain their being there? Has God renounced his holiness? Has Sinai let go its thunders? Has the law given up its obligations? The devil protests they ought not to be there; he would tell you, if he could speak to you, there must be some mistake; for such persons have no business there at all. We rejoice to know there is no mistake. An apostle himself describes the character of many of those that are there, when he tells us that "Neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." So Paul says; yet we find such persons actually there worshipping the Lamb. Then how do you explain it? The apostle says: "Such *were* some of you; but ye are washed;" you have washed your robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The devil can quote the apostle's words: "Neither idolaters, nor adulterers, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God;" therefore what right have you, Paul, to be there? what right have you, Peter, to be there? what right have you, the chiefest of sinners, to be there? The answer that Peter would give, the answer that Paul does give, the answer that the chiefest of sinners may give, is—Such we were, no doubt about it, and worse than you suppose us to have been; but we are washed; we have washed our robes, and made them

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clean; we are sanctified, we are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. Oh, there is no mistake!—the guiltiest, the wickedest, the worst are there. Marvellous love! precious blood! glorious sacrifice!

> "Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
> Shall never lose its power,
> Till all the ransomed church of God
> Be saved, to sin no more."

No; there is no mistake. They have palms in their hands; they struggled, they fought, and they triumphed; there is no mistake, for they stand before the throne, and serve him day and night without ceasing; and "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

There is another feature relating to this spotless Lamb—those that are around him and worship him are not a few, as certain ultra-Calvinists believe; and they are not all, as certain Universalists believe; but they are a vastly larger body than the most sanguine of us are sometimes disposed to admit. Many we shall find there that we, in our pride, conceit, and dogmatism, excluded. We apply tests that are often very erroneous. Some men are always speaking religion, and we think they must necessarily be perfect saints—we may miss them in heaven; and some men rarely say a word (and the deepest thoughts are not spoken, the richest feelings never ebb into expressions); we in our uncharitableness think they never can be there—we shall rejoice, we shall not be surprised, when we meet them with the palm branch, and the golden harp, and the golden crown, mingling in the mighty multitude, not the least accepted worshippers that are there. It is a great multitude. The Jew was a bigot; he thought there was no religion out of his nation; just as some people are bigots now, who think there is no salvation out of their church. But all these, the de-

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marcations of nations, the divisions of churches, were thrown down when the veil of the temple was rent, and the glory, the inner glory, broke upon the outer world. What was a national cistern, refreshing Israel of old, has become now the great fountain, whose inexhaustible streams water and make glad all tongues, kindreds, peoples, and nations. Of old the ears of the ripe wheat were gathered around Jerusalem only; now wherever the wheat is ripe (and, as the old Covenanter said, God still spares the green, and takes the ripe), be it in east, west, north, or south, it is bound into a sheaf, and it is welcome as an offering before God. We read that "Many shall come from the east and the west, and from the north and from the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;" or in the beautiful words of the Moravian poet, Montgomery—

"Arabia's desert ranger
To Christ shall bow the knee;
And Ethiopia's stranger
His glory come and see.
With anthems of devotion,
Ships from the isles shall meet;
And pour the wealth of ocean
In tribute at his feet.
Kings shall fall down before him,
And gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore him;
His praise all people sing.
For he shall have dominion
O'er river, sea, and shore;
Far as the eagle's pinion,
Or dove's light wing can soar."

Such is the mighty multitude that will be gathered out of all nations. They sing the song, it is said, of Moses and the Lamb. You recollect the splendid song: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." Well, now, that song of Moses had its key-note Christ, and at that blissful day the song of Moses shall be merged in the song of the Lamb; and it will be seen that all true

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songs that were ever sung from lonely believing hearts were all connected with the grand central key-note, the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is said, lastly, in the Apocalypse: "I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." When we read there was no temple where the Lamb was, we seem to feel a deficiency. Take away from England and Scotland their sabbaths, their sanctuaries, with their spires like fingers pointing upward and tapering to the rest that remaineth for the people of God, and you would rob the landscape of its loveliest features. Then it does seem strange that it should be said there was no temple there. But the reason is obvious; the whole earth, with its mosaic of rock, and wood, and streams, and seas, and flowers, has been consecrated and made the floor of that great temple whose high altar is the Son of God, whose component stones are living stones; the cement of which is love, knitting all these stones, more beautiful, infinitely more precious, than diamonds, to the great foundation stone; and in that new temple, of which the earth's floor is the consecrated pavement, there is daily service; there is nightly service also; for they serve him day and night without ceasing; and a hurricane of praise, like the voice of many thunders and as the voice of many waters, ceaselessly rises around the throne of God and of the Lamb; and the glory of the Lamb, that puts out the light of sun, and moon, and stars, renders all other lights unnecessary. And no more as servants in the cold and wintry outer porch, which is the present state, worshippers in beauty, in holiness, in peace, th[e] would have kept, but whom God took because h[e] them more, shall meet and mingle and join anthem peal which shall never cease, round th[e] altar, the only altar in the universe, the Lo[rd] Christ. And then all that redeemed multitude, constitute one temple, so they constitute, we a[re]

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one bride. We read, just before the millennial light breaks out in the 20th of Revelation: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready." And one of the ministering spirits came and said: "I will show you the bride of the Lamb." What does this mean? It is this—Christ selects all that believe, of all ages, of all generations, all that will wash their robes in his precious blood; that is, all that will believe on him as he is set forth in the Gospel; and makes them his bride. And we are told by the apostle that Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it; and that he will present her at that day to himself a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or blemish, or any such thing—his name hers, his rights hers, his glory hers. And the most marvellous fact in God's most marvellous universe—for new marvels are daily discovered by new efforts of science—will be that the Prince of Peace, the King of glory, looked upon us in rags, in wretchedness, in sin, in wickedness, in iniquity, diseased, dying, dead; and made of us his bride, whom he loves with a love that never falters, and crowns with a glory which shall never die, and has identified, notwithstanding all she has been, with himself for ever and ever.

Such then are some of the pictures of the Lamb as he is set forth in the Scriptures. He is spoken of, in conclusion, as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. There never was but one way to heaven, never was but one Saviour, never was but one Sacrifice; its virtues extending backward from the Cross to poor Eve, looking on the rose that faded in her hands as her retreating footsteps sounded at the gates of Paradise, and extending forward to the last generation of humankind. Christ crucified is the central fact, the central date, the grand event in the history of God's universe. He was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Abraham was a Christian in the dawn; we are Christians near the high, the ceaseless noon; both however trusting in the same Saviour.

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LECTURE XXXVII.

THE LESSON OF THE DAY.

DOCTRINE leads to duty. Prophecy inspires the present with its hopes. They that look for the glorious morrow learn and live the lesson of to-day.

"*Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.*"—2 PETER iii. 14.

HERE is the practical duty that flows from all the themes to which we have been directing attention. The words are evidence that these themes are fraught with practical importance—that they are not mere speculations fitted to gratify an itching curiosity—but grand thoughts, suggestive themes, tending to make man wiser, happier, holier, and fitted for the kingdom of heaven. Now what are "such things," which the apostle says, ye look for? "Seeing that ye look for such things." He tells us in the previous part of the chapter: a dissolving earth, under the action of intense heat—an evanishing heavens, before the breath of the Lord of hosts—the elements melting with fervent heat—nature passing into her last transformation with a mighty noise—all things dissolved—God the Saviour descending on the earth—a new heaven and a new earth, according to his promise in Isaiah lxv., wherein dwelleth righteousness. But, what should be the effect of our looking for all this? Terror? No. Apathy? No. Indifference? No. Giving up all for lost, like men in a wreck on the ocean, and plunging into the wildest excesses? No; but—"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things," the logic of these things is, "be diligent that ye may be found of him in

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peace, without spot, and blameless." Here then we have the practical action of this hope: "Seeing that ye look for such things." If we are not looking for them, we are not acting in accordance with the apostle's prescription. If then we are looking for these things, where do we look for them? In promise, in prophecy; in the signs of the age, in the phenomena of the day. Our blessed Lord rebuked the generation in which he lived when he told them, You judge of the weather by the signs in the sky; and yet you are ignorant of and insensible to the signs, the moral and far more important signs of the age in which you live. If then we are looking for these things, we are first of all to be diligent. We look for a new heavens and a new earth; see that we have new hearts and a new nature meet for the mighty transformation. As righteousness is the tenant of the new earth, righteousness must be the tenant of each heart that is to beat on that new earth. Let the Lord our righteousness, Jesus Christ, dwell in every heart, that when he comes, in the beautiful words of the apostle, we may be found of him without spot and blameless in that day. Our looking, therefore, for this is the exercise of hope. What are the component elements of Christian character? Faith that looks back; love that looks up; hope that looks forward. Faith is fed by facts, doctrines, and truths, that grow out of the cross of Christ; love is fed by studying him who so loved us that he died for us, and of whom it is said: "We love him because he first loved us;" and hope is fed by using the promise and the prophecy as a telescopic tube along which we look, and see more clearly and brightly the glory that shines in the distant horizon, destined to overflow with its splendour the length and breadth of the globe. This hope which is now in our hearts—this looking for these things—is a flower gathered from Paradise that is to be; perfuming our hearts with its precious fragrance, and giving the man who looks for the glory that is to come an inner taste of it that is an earnest and a prelibation of it before that glory overtakes him. Hope is the earnest

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of what is to be; it brings into our hearts the olive branch, to show the waters are assuaged from the face of the earth, and that the new heavens and the new earth are about to dawn. Are you looking for anything beyond the present? It is the mark of the brute to have its horizon all in the present; it is the mark, as it is the dignity, of the man to look far beyond the visible diurnal sphere, and rising on the wings of hope, to hold communion with things that are unseen, but real and eternal. But alas! there are some that do not believe in these things, and therefore do not think about them; some that believe them, but are indifferent to them; some that do not look for them at all, but look from them, and think we have no business with them. But the apostle says to us Christians, to us believers: "Seeing ye look for these things;" and if 1800 years ago they looked for them, surely now that the 1800 years have swept past we may look for them still more; and looking for them will not only be a refreshment in the present, but it will prompt to the practice of whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are just, and lovely, and of good report. Accordingly, the apostle says the very first duty that devolves upon those who look for such things is: "Be diligent." What does diligence imply? You know what diligence in business is—early up in the morning; first in the market; all your wits about you; ready honestly to make the best bargain, and to gain the largest profit, and to find the best market. Take the diligence with which men work the world, and import it into that loftier world wherein far more momentous transactions take place. If we are to be diligent, what does it include? First of all, it includes watchfulness. Sleep was the sin of the five foolish virgins; all slept; but their sleep was a sleep preceded by indifference, and indifference followed by destruction from the presence of the Lord. Apathy is scarcely compatible with Christianity. One cannot conceive a Christian to have no feeling in relation to those stupendous truths that are here. Man is not all head, merely for thinking; he is

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not all heart, merely for feeling; but he is a mixture of both; he is a creature of feeling as well as a creature of reasoning; and the man that does not feel the truths of the Gospel cannot understand them, or does not know them, or does not believe them. Surely stupendous truths are these—that upon the decision of an hour rests the destiny of eternity; that upon what you and I are to-day may be contingent what we shall enjoy or what we shall suffer for ever. The lost in misery would give the universe for one Sunday of the Son of man. We never know our blessings till we lose them; we do not feel the magnitude of our privileges till these privileges pass from us, and are given to others bringing forth fruits worthy of them. Let there be no apathy. We deprecate fanaticism; but we demand the fervour of Christian love, the warmth of a regenerated heart, the temperature of heaven in each individual—the earnest of admission to rest for the whole church and family of Christ. If, again, we are to be diligent, it implies that we are to labour. Now while it is quite true that heaven is by grace, it is not the less true it is not given to indolence. Saved by grace does not imply saved without effort. God in saving us freely does not sanction or consecrate indolence and inactivity; on the contrary, every word in the Gospel implies labour: "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." The effort is yours, hopeless, powerless, if alone; the blessing is God's. The blessing is on the effort, it crowns the effort, and gives you the reward of your works, and yet recognizes no merit, but gives salvation exclusively of grace. There is many a rugged bit of road on the way to heaven; many a heavy storm will beat upon you; many a siren voice will try to seduce you; many a persecutor will seek to turn you back; you will need to be watchful, diligent, prayerful; and remember that it is with heaven as one said of old to a royal personage of mathematics—there is no royal road to heaven. It is a hard, rugged, up-hill struggle; and you must put the

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stout heart to the stiff hill, and labour and strive, and yet feel that all your toil, and labour, and striving are in themselves utterly worthless, and that by grace alone you can be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. In the third place, this diligence which the apostle here recommends implies zeal. A man who is not zealous in the sphere in which he is placed in this world will not do much good. If you wish to be a scholar, you must be zealous; if you wish to be a successful merchant, you must be zealous; if you want to get on in the world in any sense, or in any shape, or to any extent, you must give your heart to the work in which you are engaged. God does not bid a man be idle, indolent, gossiping, trifling, instead of minding his business; he says that if a thing be good, it is right to be zealous in that thing; but if zeal be demanded for the lower level, what zeal is required on that higher one? Zealous in good works let us be; zealous in the worship of God; zealous in the pursuit of every grace; zealous in striving to enter into the kingdom of heaven; zealous in the love of God, in sacrifice for God, in doing good to others, and in making known to the utmost of your power the unsearchable riches of Christ. Depend upon it if you have no permanent love, no zeal, no toil, no diligence, you have not yet entered on the road that leads to immortality and glory. Be diligent: "Wherefore, seeing ye look for such things, be diligent."

He says, in the next place: "that ye may be found without spot and blameless"—"without spot." In two senses that is accomplished. First, we are stained by nature; and so unchangeably stained that as soon may the Ethiopian wash his skin white with soap, or the leopard's spots be changed by nitre, as man's heart be transformed, and purified, and regenerated by anything that man can do or that man can apply. But we need not only a change of nature in order to qualify us for the kingdom of heaven; we need primarily a change of state, that we may have a title and a right of entrance into that kingdom. We are by nature without merit, except the merit of penalty

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and evil; we are by nature dead in trespasses and in sins, having no power to justify ourselves; there being no person upon earth, priest, or presbyter, or people, who can justify and pardon us. But, blessed be God! every spot may be washed away in precious blood; every defilement covered with a glorious righteousness; and you and I—sin-stained and ruined as we are, and disfranchised in every sense for the presence of God and for an entrance into heaven—may be presented a glorious church, without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, unto Him that sees flaws in the stars, faults in the angels, yet can see nothing but perfection in them who are clad in the righteousness of the perfect Saviour, Jesus Christ, our God and our Sacrifice. Not only is the external spot thus covered, but the internal spots of our nature are purified. We need two things for heaven: we need a title to it, which we forfeited; and we need a fitness for it, which we lost, and without which we never can be made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. When we are justified, and pardoned, and absolved, there is a change of state; but we need in addition to that a transformation of nature. It is a great law in the physical world that every orb is made for its inhabitant. There are some of the planets so dense that if you and I were placed upon one of them our own weight would crush us into atoms; that is to say, the attraction of gravity would be so great that we should be crushed by simply being there. There are others of them, again, so little dense that we could not stand or exist upon them; the law being that the orb is made for the inhabitant, and the inhabitant is fitted for the orb. So it is in this lower world: the fish by its organism is fitted for the water; the bird by its structure is fitted for the air; the ox by his structure is fitted for the grass and for the field; and man, by his magnificent and composite nature, is fitted for those grand functions which more or less imperfectly he seeks to fulfil. So we must be fitted for that new heaven and new earth, the atmosphere of which is righteousness, the streams of which are purity, the songs of which are

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gratitude, the worship of which never ceases through everlasting ages. Suppose we could be enfranchised and entitled to heaven, but if we were not regenerated and fitted for heaven, it would be no heaven to us; we could not live in it, or breathe its air, or enter on its joys, or reciprocate its sympathies. And therefore there is required a total change, first of all, of heart. We shall never get on by lopping off a bad habit here and a bad habit there; it is well and it is expedient to lop them off; but as long as the tree is bad, so long bad sprouts will spring from it, and bad fruit, if any, will grow upon it. What is needed is a transforming touch at the very core of human nature; the quickening breath of heaven penetrating the human heart; the transforming energy of God at the very centre of our nature; and then the spring made pure, its streams will be so—the tree made good, its fruit will be fragrant, and beautiful, and precious—the heart being changed, a transforming energy will pass through the eyes, and they will not rest on vanity; and through the hands, and they will not do wicked works; and through the ear, and a covenant will be made with it; and through the feet, and they will walk in the paths of righteousness; and through the knees, and they will not kneel before Baal, or Mammon, or the gods of this world's Pantheon; they will bow only before God, the living God. Here is what is wanted—that we may be found without spot; a raiment washed in the blood of the Lamb, because of which we are entitled to heaven; not woven by our fingers, nor washed by our tears, nor purchased by our wealth, nor bequeathed by our forefathers; but bestowed upon us by Christ at once in all its perfection, incapable of addition; so pure that an angel's tear would stain it, and a martyr's holiest blood would defile it; so perfect that he that is clad in it stands before God as Christ stands, without spot. We need, next, a transformation of heart, that being entitled to heaven we may be fitted for heaven, and made meet to drink its streams, to breathe its atmosphere, to sit under the shadow of its tree of life, to eat of its blessed

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fruit, and to join in those songs that are ever new, and yet that never cease. Such then is the second great practical duty.

The third desire is, "that we may be blameless." "Be diligent; that we may be found without spot, and blameless." This word "blameless" has two significations; first, it relates to the condition of the soul in the sight of God and in our own conscience; secondly, it relates to our own conduct and character in the presence of the world and in the eyes of all mankind. We are, first of all, to seek to be blameless; the testimony of our conscience is the evidence of that. If the world blame you, it is a magnificent reply, that crushes and extinguishes all its reproaches—My conscience acquits me; God justifies me; who is he that condemneth? But secondly, we should seek by every effort in our power not only to be internally and really blameless, but outwardly to avoid every possible occasion of incurring the blame, or the reproach, or the censorious remarks of others. We are not only to abstain from evil, that we may be blameless, but we are to abstain from the appearance of evil, that the world may have nothing to fling at us as matter of reproach. It is a painful fact that many excellent Christians, blameless in the sight of God, by their temper, or by their imprudence, or by their indiscretions, or by their inconsistencies, cause the world to blaspheme, and lead it to suppose that Christianity, the source of all that beautifies and adorns, makes men sour in their tempers, cross in their intercourse with each other, uncourteous, uncivilized, and unpleasant in the midst of the world and in the transaction of this world's duties. We ought to guard against that; we ought to give the world, if possible, no handle. We shall not escape doing so; because the world looks with lynx eyes for the least flaw; and it magnifies that flaw when it discovers it to the very uttermost. But knowing this, let us avoid the appearance of evil; let us seek not only to be blameless before God, which is by far the highest, but let us strive that the inner light may cast forth its pure and

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radiating splendour; that the inner life may send forth its refreshing streams; that the very world may be constrained to say—That man, though we know nothing of his religion, nor even believe in his Bible, is so just, so upright, so courteous; he takes wrongs with such kindness, forbearance, and tenderness; he speaks so charitably of others; he will not say anything bad of a person if he can only find anything good to say of him—that man must have some inward spring that we know not of; that epistle, that living epistle, is written not with pen and ink, but with something higher; we too, touched by his excellence, charmed by his outer character, will go to the church where he goes, and learn the truths that he hears, and open the Bible that he reads, and study the lessons that he gets there. And thus on the Exchange, on the market, in the counting-house, in the shop, on the streets, you may be sending forth from you a silent but transforming power that, reproduced at the judgment-seat of Christ, will reveal to you the magnificent and glorious fact that you were converting men when you knew it not; that you were preaching Christ when you thought you were engaged with the world's duties; and that from you there issued an unconscious influence that by God's blessing transformed thousands that it touched into the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us then strive, seeing we look for such things, not only to be blameless in the view of conscience, blameless in the estimate of God, but blameless before others. And when we find that we have been misapprehended, let us explain to them; when we find that we have unwillingly, or in the heat of temper, offended or given cause of censure, let us be the very first to apologize. Next to doing what is true, beautiful, and just, is the magnanimous sight of making an apology to another when you have done wrong.

The next thing is, that we may be found not only without spot and blameless, but also "that we may be found of him in peace." All will be found *of* Christ; but all will not be found *in* Christ. We shall

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be found of Christ at the judgment-seat on the left hand or on the right; but they that are found in Christ only are his by grace and his by adoption. It should be our prayer that at that day when we are all found of him, we may be found in him; not having our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God, through faith in him; that we may be found in him, justified, absolved, accepted, and finally glorified. But he says, "that we may be found of him *in peace.*" What does that mean? Not in peace with sin; no peace with sin—it is a foe with whom we are to wage an exterminating warfare; no peace with the wicked one—Satan is our enemy; and our charity is not to embrace in its broadest sympathies him who is a murderer from the beginning. We must not hate a brother; we must not hate the worst and the wickedest of humankind; but the devil we are to hate with all our hearts, to resist him till he flee from us; never to be at peace with him until he is bound a thousand years, and cast into the bottomless pit for ever. Nor, in the next place, are we to seek to be found of Christ at peace with error. There is no peace with error. It is strange the world cannot understand this. It can understand the warring against poverty, against hunger, against nakedness, by feeding the one and clothing the other; but it cannot understand your warring with error. And yet error is the cloud that rises from the swamps of the intellect, and clouds the heart, and intercepts the sunshine of heaven. It is quite true living Christianity may be and is compatible with many a sad error; but there are some errors so deep, so great, that they strike at the very vitals of the Gospel; and they are incompatible with the acceptance of the way of life, and righteousness, and peace. But we pray that we may be found of him at peace with God; not because we shut our eyes to his justice, his holiness, his law; but because we see him in Christ just, and yet justifying them that believe, and at peace with our Christian brethren. When one looks around on the Christian church, we cannot but admit it is impossible for the most

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censorious uncharitableness to deny that the differences among real Christians are flimsy as the clouds that sweep across the sky; whilst the truths which they hold in common are fixed, and glorious, and brilliant as the stars that shine above the clouds for ever and ever. Take all the denominations of Christians; however much we may differ from one as to the quantity of water to be used at baptism; or however much we may differ from another as to kneeling, sitting, or standing at the Lord's table; or however much we may differ from a third as to the modes of worship, whether by a form of words or by a form of thought with changing words—these are immaterial and insignificant differences. We all agree in worshipping the Father, in the name of the Son, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; we all agree in accepting one day in the week for worship, in accepting one Bible; in the necessity, and privilege, and duty of prayer, of praise, of reading the Scriptures; of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God. These are the essence of Christianity, and however much our preferences may differ, our essential principles are substantially and eternally one. Wherefore be ye diligent, that ye may be found of him at peace with God, through the blood of sprinkling; at peace with all the children of God, for whom Christ died. But we must add one modifying element; that we are to seek to be found at peace with our brethren of mankind according to a limit laid down by the apostle himself: "As much as lieth in you, if it be possible, live peaceably with all men." Mark the limit, "as much as lieth in you," as a Christian; and if it be possible, consistent with higher duties, then you are to do it. But you are not called upon to dilute one saving truth in order to make it palatable to any, nor to compromise one great duty in order to conciliate the world to its observance; you are not on any account to conceal one essential truth in order that you may make the world less opposed to distinctive and vital Christianity. It is possible to buy peace at too high a price. Sacrifice the greatest prejudice on the altar of the

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humblest principle for the sake of the peace of the church and the peace of all mankind. We may rest assured that the peace that springs from compromise; the peace that rises from the diluting, or the compromising, or the concealing of vital, essential, evangelical Christianity, is peace, peace, when there is no peace. Living truth is the tree; peace is the blossom that springs from it. Cut down the tree, and you destroy peace and truth together. Let the blossoms of peace perish in the frost or be nipped by the wind; but take care of truth, the tree, and it will hear the footfall and feel the breath of returning spring; and other peaceful blossoms will beautify it, and fair and fragrant fruit will grow upon it, and we shall find that we have got the peace of God that passeth all understanding. The peace that we seek must not be like Isaiah's bridge, reaching from Egypt to Asshur; but like Jacob's ladder, one end touching the throne of God, and the other resting on the earth; and a world reconciled and a heaven rejoicing, one exchanging intercourse and communion with the other.

Seeing then ye look for these sublime changes, that may be thundering at our doors; seeing ye look for the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven; seeing that ye look beyond a new year, that shall be chequered with all the world's trials, and troubles, and griefs, and sorrows, to a new heaven and a new earth, the meeting-place of all that you love, the fireside of your Father, the home of the universe, the joy unutterable, the peace that passeth understanding—seeing ye look for these bright things and blessed things, let me beseech you, beloved, to be diligent; that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless, now and for ever.

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APPENDIX.

In order to prove that there is nothing new in the main lines of thought in this volume, I append the following extracts from the writings of the most eminent divines of the past and the present time.

Dr. Chalmers writes:—

"But while we attempt not to be 'wise above that which is written,' we should attempt, and that most studiously, to be wise up to that which is written. The disclosures are very few and very partial, which are given to us of that bright and beautiful economy which is to survive the ruins of our present one. But still there are such disclosures—and on the principle of the things that are revealed belonging to us, we have a right to walk up and down, for the purpose of observation, over the whole actual extent of them.

"We know historically that earth, that a solid, material, earth may form the dwelling of sinless creatures, in full converse and friendship with the Being who made them; that instead of a place of exile for outcasts, it may have a broad avenue of communication with the spiritual world, for the descent of ethereal beings from on high; that, like the members of an extended family, it may share in the regard and attention of the other members, and along with them be gladdened by the presence of him who is the Father of them all.

"To inquire how this can be were to attempt a wisdom beyond Scripture; but to assert that this has been, and therefore may be, is to keep most strictly and modestly within the limits of the record. For we there read, that God framed an apparatus of materialism, which, on his own surveying, he pronounced to be all very good, and the leading features of which may still be recognized, among the things and the substances that are around us—and that he created man with the bodily organs and senses which we now wear—and placed him under the very canopy that is over our heads, and spread around him a scenery, perhaps lovelier in its tints, and more smiling and serene in the whole aspect of it, but certainly made up in the main of the same objects that still compose the prospects of our visible con

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templations, and there working with his hands in a garden, and with trees on every side of him, and even with animals sporting at his feet, was this inhabitant of earth, in the midst of all those earthly and familiar accompaniments, in full possession of the best immunities of a citizen of heaven—sharing in the delight of angels, and while he gazed on the very beauties which we ourselves gaze upon, rejoicing in them most as the tokens of a present and presiding Deity. It were venturing on the region of conjecture to affirm, whether if Adam had not fallen, the earth that we now tread upon would have been the everlasting abode of him and his posterity. But certain it is, that man, at the first, had for his place this world, and, at the same time for his privilege, an unclouded friendship with God, and, for his prospect, an immortality which death was neither to intercept nor put an end to. He was terrestrial in respect of condition, and yet celestial in respect both of character and enjoyment.

"His eye looked outwardly on a landscape of earth, while his heart breathed upwardly in the love of heaven. And though he trod the solid platform of our world, and was compassed about with its horizon, still was he within the circle of God's favoured creation, and took his place among the freemen and the denizens of the great spiritual commonwealth.

"This may serve to rectify an imagination of which we think that all must be conscious, as if the grossness of materialism was only for those who had degenerated into the grossness of sin; and that, when a spiritualizing process had purged away all our corruption, then, by the stepping-stones of a death and a resurrection, we should be borne away to some ethereal region, where sense, and body, and all in the shape either of audible sound or of tangible substance, were unknown. And hence that strangeness of impression which is felt by you, should the supposition be offered, that in the place of eternal blessedness there will be ground to walk upon; or scenes of luxuriance to delight the corporeal senses; or the kindly intercourse of friends talking familiarly, and by articulate converse together; or, in short, anything that has the least resemblance to a local territory, filled with various accommodations, and peopled over its whole extent by creatures formed like ourselves, having bodies such as we now wear, and faculties of perception, and thought, and mutual communication, such as we now exercise. The common imagination that we have of Paradise on the other side of death is, that of a lofty aerial region, where the inmates float in ether, or are mysteriously suspended upon nothing; where all the warm and sensible accompaniments which give such an expression of strength, and life, and colouring to our present habitation, are attenuated into a sort of spiritual element that is meagre, and imperceptible, and utterly uninviting to the eye of mortals here below; where every vestige of materialism is done away, and nothing left but certain unearthly scenes that have

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no power of allurement, and certain unearthly ecstacies with which it is felt impossible to sympathise. The holders of this imagination forget, all the while, that really there is no essential connection between materialism and sin; that the world which we now inhabit had all the amplitude and solidity of its present materialism before sin entered into it; that God, so far, on that account, from looking slightly upon it, after it had received the last touch of his creating hand, reviewed the earth, and the waters, and the firmament, and all the green herbage, with the living creatures, and the man whom he had raised in dominion over them, and he saw everything that he had made, and behold it was all very good.

"They forget that on the birth of materialism, when it stood out in the freshness of those glories which the great Architect of Nature had impressed upon it, that then the 'morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.' They forget the appeals that are made everywhere in the Bible to this material workmanship; and how from the face of these visible heavens, and the garniture of this earth that we tread upon, the greatness and the goodness of God are reflected on the view of his worshippers. No, my brethren, the object of the administration we sit under is, to extirpate sin, but it is not to sweep away materialism. By the convulsions of the last day it may be shaken, and broken down from its present arrangements, and thrown into such fitful agitations as that the whole of its existing frame-work shall fall to pieces, and by a heat so fervent as to melt its most solid elements may be utterly dissolved. And thus may the earth again become without form and void, but without one particle of its substance going into annihilation. Out of the ruins of this second chaos, may another heaven and another earth be made to arise; and a new materialism, and other aspects of magnificence and beauty, emerge from the wreck of this mighty transformation; and the world be peopled as before with the varieties of material loveliness, and space be again lighted up into a firmament of material splendour.

"Were our place of everlasting blessedness so purely spiritual as it is commonly imagined, then the soul of man, after, at death, having quitted his body, would quit it conclusively.

"But a great step is gained simply by dissolving the alliance that exists in the minds of many between the two ideas of sin and materialism; or proving that, when once sin is done away, it consists with all we know of God's administration that materialism shall be perpetuated in the full bloom and vigour of immortality. It altogether holds out a warmer and more alluring picture of the elysium that awaits us, when told, that there will be beauty to delight the eye; and music to regale the ear; and the comfort that springs from all the charities of intercourse between man and man, holding converse as they do on earth, and gladdening each other with the benignant smiles that play on

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the human countenance, or the accents of kindness that fall in soft and soothing melody from the human voice.

"There is much of the innocent and much of the inspiring, and much to affect and elevate the heart, in the scenes and the contemplations of materialism; and we do hail the information of our text, that, after the dissolution of its present frame-work, it will again be varied and decked out anew in all the graces of its unfading verdure and of its unbounded variety—that in addition to our direct and personal view of the Deity, when he comes down to tabernacle with men, we shall also have the reflection of him in a lovely mirror of his own workmanship; and that, instead of being transported to some abode of dimness and of mystery, so remote from human experience as to be beyond all comprehension, we shall walk for ever in a land replenished with those sensible delights, and those sensible glories, which, we doubt not, will lie most profusely scattered over the 'new heavens, and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

"But though a paradise of sense, it will not be a paradise of sensuality. Though not so unlike the present world as many apprehend it, there will be one point of total dissimilarity betwixt them. It is not the entire substitution of spirit for matter that will distinguish the future economy from the present. But it will be the entire substitution of righteousness for sin. It is this which signalizes the Christian from the Mahometan paradise; not that sense and substance, and splendid imagery, and the glories of a visible creation seen with bodily eyes, are excluded from it, but that all which is vile in principle, or voluptuous in impurity, will be utterly excluded from it. There will be a firm earth, as we have at present, and a heaven stretched over it, as we have at present; and it is not by the absence of these, but by the absence of sin, that the abodes of immortality will be characterized. There will both be heavens and earth, it would appear, in the next great administration, and with this speciality to mark it from the present one, that it will be a heavens and earth 'wherein dwelleth righteousness.'"

JOHN WESLEY writes:—

"Let us next take a view of those changes which we may reasonably suppose will then take place in the earth. It will no more be bound up with intense cold, nor parched up with extreme heat; but will have such a temperature as will be most conducive to its fruitfulness. If, in order to punish its inhabitants, God did of old—

> 'Bid his angels turn askance
> This oblique globe'—

thereby occasioning violent cold on one part and violent heat on the other; he will, undoubtedly, then order them to restore it to its original position; so that there will be a final end, on the

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one hand, of the burning heat, which makes some parts of it scarce habitable, and on the other, of

'The rago of Arctos and eternal frost.'

And it will then contain no jarring or destructive principles within its own bosom. It will no more have any of those violent convulsions in its own bowels. It will no more be shaken or torn asunder by the impetuous force of earthquakes; and will, therefore, need neither Vesuvius nor Etna, nor any burning mountain to prevent them. There will be no more horrid rocks, or frightful precipices; no wild deserts, or burning sands; no impassable morasses, or unfruitful bogs, to swallow up the unwary traveller. There will, doubtless, be inequalities on the surface of the earth; which are not blemishes, but beauties. And though I will not affirm that—

'Earth has this variety from heaven,
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale;'

yet I cannot think gently-rising hills will be any defect, but an ornament of the new made earth. And doubtless we shall then likewise have occasion to say—

'Lo! there his wondrous skill arrays
The fields in cheerful green;
A thousand herbs his hand displays,
A thousand flowers between!'

And what will the general produce of the earth be? Not thorns, briars, or thistles; nor any useless or fetid weed; nor any poisonous, hurtful, or unpleasant plant; but every one that can be conducive, in anywise, either to our use or pleasure. How far beyond all that the most lively imagination is now able to conceive! We shall no more regret the loss of the terrestrial paradise, or sigh at that well-devised description of our great poet:—

'Then shall this mount
Of paradise, by might of waves be moved
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all its verdure spoil'd and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root, an island salt and bare!'

For all the earth shall be a more beautiful paradise than Adam ever saw.

"Such will be the state of the new earth with regard to the meaner, the inanimate parts of it. But, great as this change will be, it is nothing in comparison of that which will then take place throughout all animated nature.

"In the living part of the creation were seen the most deplorable effects of Adam's apostacy. The whole animated creation,

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whatever has life, from leviathan to the smallest mite, was thereby made subject to such vanity as the inanimate creatures could not be. They were subject to that fell monster, *Death*, the conqueror of all that breathe. They were made subject to its forerunner, pain, in its ten thousand forms; although 'God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the death of any living.'

"How many millions of creatures in the sea, in the air, and on every part of the earth, can now no otherwise preserve their lives than by taking away the lives of others; by tearing in pieces and devouring their poor, innocent, unresisting, fellow-creatures! Miserable lot of such innumerable multitudes, who, insignificant as they seem, are the offspring of one common Father; the creatures of the same God of love! It is probable not only two-thirds of the animal creation, but ninety-nine parts of a hundred, are under the necessity of destroying others in order to preserve their own life!

"But it shall not always be so. He that sitteth upon the throne will soon change the face of all things, and give a demonstrative proof to all his creatures 'that his mercy is over all his works.'

"The horrid state of things which at present obtains *will soon be at an end*. On the new earth, no creature will kill, or hurt, or give pain to any other. The scorpion will have no poisonous sting, the adder no venomous teeth. The lion will have no claws to tear the lamb, no teeth to grind his flesh and bones. Nay, no creature, no beast, bird, or fish, will have any inclination to hurt any other; for cruelty will be far away, and savageness and fierceness be forgotten. So that violence shall be heard no more, neither wasting nor destruction seen on the face of the earth. 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb' (the words may be literally as well as figuratively understood), 'and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; they shall not hurt or destroy,' from the rising up of the sun to the going down of the same."

DR. HITCHCOCK writes:—

"The future changes in the condition of the earth, as they are taught us by revelation and analogy, or, rather, by geology, will form the subject of my present lecture. And my first object will be, to ascertain, if possible, precisely what the Bible teaches us concerning these changes.

"We find in the Scriptures several descriptions, more or less definite, of the changes which this globe will hereafter undergo. Some of them, however, are couched in the figurative language of prophecy, and others are incidental allusions; and concerning the precise meaning of such descriptions, there will, of course, be a diversity of opinion.

"There are, however, some passages on this subject as literal

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and as precise in their meaning as language can be. Now, it is one of the rules for interpreting language, that, where a work contains several accounts of the same event, the description which is most simple and literal ought to be made the index for obtaining the meaning of those passages which are figurative, or, on any account, obscure. I shall, therefore, select the passage of Scripture which all acknowledge to be most plain and definite, respecting the future destruction of the earth, and the new heavens and earth that are to succeed, and first inquire into its precise meaning; after which we shall be better prepared to ascertain what modification of that meaning other passages of sacred writ demand.

"It needs but a cursory examination of the Bible to convince any one that the description in the Second Epistle of Peter, of the future destruction and renovation of the earth and heavens, is eminently the passage first to be examined, because the fullest and clearest on this subject. It is the apostle's object directly and literally to describe these great changes, apart from all embellishments of language.

"'There shall come,' says he, 'in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.'

"It would require too much time, and moreover, is not necessary to the object I have in view, to enter into minute verbal criticism upon this passage. I will only remark that the phrase translated 'the earth and the works that are therein,' might

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with equal propriety be rendered 'the earth and the works that are thereon;' and yet the difference of meaning between the two modes of expression is of no great importance. Again, by the term 'heavens,' in this passage, we are evidently to understand the atmosphere, or region immediately surrounding the earth; as in the first chapter of Genesis, where he said that 'God called the firmament heavens;' the plural form being used in the Hebrew, though not in the English translation.

"What now, by a fair exegesis, is taught in this passage concerning the destruction and renovation of the world? The following train of remark may conduct us to the true answer to this inquiry:—

"In the first place, this passage is to be understood literally. It would seem as if it could hardly be necessary to present any formal proof of this position to any person of common sense, who had read the passage. But the fact is, that men of no mean reputation as commentators, have maintained that the whole of it is only a vivid figurative prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. Others suppose the new heavens and new earth here described to exist before the conflagration of the world. But these new heavens and earth are represented as the residence of the righteous after the burning and melting of the earth, which, according to other parts of Scripture, is to take place at the end of the world, or at the general judgment. How strange, that in order to sustain a favourite theory, able men should thus invert the obvious order of these great events, so clearly described in the Bible! Still more absurd is it to attempt to fasten a figurative character upon this most simple statement of inspiration. It is, indeed, true, that the prophets have sometimes set forth great political and moral changes, the downfall of empires, or of distinguished men, by the destruction of the heavens and the earth, and the growing pale and darkening of the sun and moon. But in all these cases the figurative character of the description is most obvious; while in the passage from Peter its literal character is equally obvious. Take, for example, this statement: 'By the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth, standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.'

"I believe no one has ever doubted that the destruction of the world by water, here described, refers to Noah's deluge. Now, how absurd to admit that this is a literal description of that event, and then to maintain the remainder of the sentence, which declares the future destruction of that same world by fire, to be figurative in the highest degree! For if this destruction mean only the destruction of Jerusalem, or any other great political or moral revolution, the language is one of the boldest

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figures which can be framed. Who, that knows anything of the laws of language, does not see the supreme absurdity of thus coupling in the same sentence the most simple and certain literality with the strongest of all figures?

"What mark is given us, by which we may know where the boundary is between the literal and the metaphorical sense? From what part of the Bible, or from what uninspired author, can a parallel example be adduced? What but the strongest necessity, the most decided *exegentia loci*, would justify such an anomalous interpretation of any author? Nay, I do not believe any necessity could justify it. It would be more reasonable to infer that the passage had no meaning, or an absurd one. But surely no such necessity exists in the present case. Understood literally, the passage teaches only what is often expressed, though less fully, in many other parts of Scripture; and, even though some of these other passages should be involved in a degree of obscurity—and I am not disposed to deny that some obscurity rests upon one or two of them—it would be no good reason for transforming so plain a description into a highly-wrought figurative representation; especially when by no ingenuity can we thus alter more than one part of the sentence. I conclude, therefore, that if any part of the Bible is literal, we are thus to consider this chapter of Peter.

"In the second place, this passage does not teach that the earth will be annihilated.

"The prevailing opinion in this country probably has been, and still is, that the destruction of the world described by Peter will amount to annihilation—that the matter of the globe will cease to be. But, in all ages, there have been many who believe that the destruction will be only the ruin of the present economy of the world, but not its utter extinction. And surely, Peter's description does not imply annihilation of the matter of the globe. He makes fire the agent of the destruction, and in order to ascertain the extent of the ruin that will follow, we have only to inquire what effect combustion will have upon matter.

"The common opinion is, that intense combustion actually destroys or annihilates matter, because it is thereby dissipated. But the chemist knows that not one particle of matter has ever been thus deprived of existence; the fire only changes the form of matter, but never annihilates it. When solid matter is changed into gas, as in most cases of combustion, it seems to be annihilated, because it disappears; but it has only assumed a new form, and exists as really as before. Since, therefore, biblical and scientific truth must agree, we may be sure that the apostle never meant to teach that the matter of the globe would cease to be, through the action of fire upon it; nor is there anything in his language that implies such a result, but most obviously the reverse.

"If these things be so, then, in the third place, we may infer

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that Peter did not mean to teach that the matter of the globe would be in the least diminished by the final conflagration.

"I doubt not the sufficiency of Divine power partially or wholly to annihilate the material universe. But heat, however intense, has no tendency to do this; it only gives matter a new form. And heat is the only agency which the apostle represents as employed. In short, we have no evidence, either from science or revelation, that the minutest atom of matter has ever been destroyed since the original creation; nor have we any more evidence that any of it ever will be reduced to the nothingness from whence it sprang. The prevalent ideas upon this subject all result from erroneous notions of the effect of intense heat.

"In the fourth place, the passage under consideration teaches us that whatever upon or within the earth is capable of combustion will undergo that change, and that the entire globe will be melted.

"The language of Peter has always seemed to me extremely interesting. He says that 'the heavens' (or atmosphere) 'will pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up; looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.'

"This language approaches nearer to an anticipation of the scientific discoveries of modern times than any other part of Scripture. And yet the time it was written, it would not have enabled any one to understand the chemistry of the great changes which it describes. But, now that their chemistry is understood, we perceive that the language is adapted to it, in a manner which no uninspired writer would have done. The atmosphere is represented as passing away with a great noise—an effect which the chemist would predict by the union of its oxygen with the hydrogen and other gases liberated by the intense heat. Yet what uninspired writer of the first century would have imagined such a result?

"Again, when we consider the notions which then prevailed, and which are still widely diffused, why should the apostle add to the simple statement that the earth would be burnt up, the declaration that its elements would be melted? For the impression was, that the combustion would entirely destroy the matter of the globe. But the chemist finds that the greater part of the earth has already been oxidised, or burnt, and on this matter the only effect of the heat, unless intense enough to dissipate it, would be to melt it. If, therefore, the apostle had said only that the world would be burnt up, the sceptical chemist would have inferred that he had made a mistake through ignorance of chemistry. But he cannot now draw such an inference; for the apostle's language clearly implies, that only the combustible matter of the globe will be burnt, while the elements, or first

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principles of things, will be melted; so that the final result will be an entire liquid, fiery globe. Such a wonderful adaptation of his description to modern science could not surely have resulted from human sagacity, but must be the fruit of Divine inspiration.

"In the fifth place, the passage under consideration teaches that this earth will be renovated by the final conflagration and become the abode of the righteous. After describing the day of God, 'wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,' Peter adds, 'Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' Now, the apostle does not here, in so many words, declare that the new heavens and earth will be the present world and its atmosphere, purified and renovated by fire; but it is certainly a natural inference that such was his meaning. For if he intended some other remote and quite different place, why should he call it 'earth,' and especially, why should he surround it with an atmosphere? The natural and most obvious meaning of the passage surely is, that the future residence of the righteous will be this present terraqueous globe, after its entire organic and combustible matter shall have been destroyed, and its whole mass reduced by heat to a liquid state, and then a new economy reared up on its surface, not adapted to sinful, but to sinless beings, and, therefore, quite different from its present condition—probably more perfect, but still the same earth and surrounding heavens.

"There are, indeed, some difficulties in the way of such a meaning to this passage, and objections to a material heaven; and these I shall notice in the proper place. But I have given what seems to me the natural and obvious meaning of the passage.

"In view, then, of all the important passages of Scripture concerning the future destruction and renovation of the earth, I think we may fairly conclude that none of them require us to modify the natural and obvious meaning of Peter which has been given. In general, they all coincide with the views presented by that apostle; or if, in any case, there is a slight apparent difference, the figurative character of all other statements besides his require us to receive his views as the true standard, and to modify the meaning of the others. We may, therefore, conclude that the Bible does plainly and distinctly teach that this earth will hereafter be burned up; in other words, that all upon or within it, capable of combustion, will be consumed, and the entire mass, the elements, without the loss of one particle of the matter now existing, will be melted; and then, that the world, thus purified from the contamination of sin, and surrounded by a new atmosphere, or heavens, and adapted in all respects to the nature and wants of spiritual and sinless beings, will become the residence of the righteous. Of the precise nature of that

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new dispensation, and of the mode of existence there, the Scriptures are indeed silent. But that, like the present world, it will be material—that there will be a solid globe, and a transparent expanse around it—seems most clearly indicated in the sacred record."

DR. KNAPP, one of the most scientific and judicious of theologians, thus remarks upon the passage of Peter:—

"It cannot be thought that what is here said respecting the burning of the world is to be understood figuratively, as Wellstein supposes; because the fire is here too directly opposed to the literal water of the flood to be so understood. It is the object of Peter to refute the boast of scoffers, that all things had remained unchanged from the beginning, and that, therefore, no day of judgment and no end of the world could be expected. And so he says that originally, at the time of the creation, the whole earth was covered and overflowed with water (Gen. i.), and that from hence the dry land appeared; and the same was true at the time of Noah's flood. But there is yet to come a great fire revolution. The heavens and the earth (the earth with its atmosphere) are reserved, or kept in store for the fire, until the day of judgment (ver. 10). At that time the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will be dissolved by fervent heat, and everything upon the earth will be burnt up. The same thing is taught in verse 12. But in verse 13, Peter gives the design of this revolution. It will not be annihilation; but we expect a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, *i. e.*, an entirely new, altered, and beautiful abode for man, to be built from the ruins of his former dwelling-place as the future habitation of the pious (Rev. xxi. 1.) This will be very much in the same way as a more perfect and an immortal body will be reared from the body which we now possess."

"The glorification of the visible creation," says THOLUCK, the distinguished German divine, "is more definitely declared in Rev. xxi. 1, although it must be borne in mind that a prophetic vision is there described. Still more definitely do we find the belief of a transformation of the material world declared in 2 Peter iii. 7–12. The idea that the perfected kingdom of Christ is to be transferred to heaven is properly a modern notion. According to Paul and the Revelation of John, the kingdom of God is placed upon the earth, in so far as this itself has part in the universal transformation. This exposition has been adopted and defended by most of the oldest commentators; for example, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Hieronymus, Augustine, Luther, Koppe, and others."

LUTHER says, in his lively way: "God will make, not the earth only, but the heavens also, much more beautiful than they are at present. At present we see the world in its working clothes;

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but hereafter it will be arrayed in its Easter and Whitsuntide robes."

"I cannot but feel astonishment," says DR. JOHN PYE SMITH, "that any serious and intelligent man should have his mind fettered with the common, I might call it the vulgar, notion of a proper destruction of the earth; and some seem to extend the notion to the whole solar system, and even the entire material universe; applying the idea of an extinction of being, a reducing to nothingness. This notion has, indeed, been often used to aid impassioned description in sermons and poetry; and thus it has gained so strong a hold upon the feelings of many pious persons, that they have made it an article of their faith. But I confess myself unable to find any evidence of it in nature, reason, or Scripture. We can discover nothing like destruction in the matter of the universe as subjected to our senses. Masses are disintegrated, forms are changed, compounds are decomposed; but not an atom is annihilated. Neither have we the shadow of reason to assert that mind, the seat of intelligence, ever was, or ever will be, in a single instance, destroyed. The declaration in Scripture that 'the heavens and the earth shall flee away, and no more place be found for them,' is undoubtedly figurative, and denotes the most momentous changes in the scenes of the Divine moral government. If it be the purpose of God that the earth shall be subjected to a total conflagration, we perfectly well know that the instruments of such an event lie close at hand, and wait only the Divine volition to burst out in a moment. But that would not be a destruction; it would be a mere change of form, and no doubt, would be subservient to the most glorious results. We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Says DR. GRIFFIN, one of the ablest of the American divines: "A question here arises, whether the new heavens and the new earth shall be created out of the ruins of the old. That is, whether the old will be renovated and restored in a more glorious form, or whether the old will be annihilated, and the new made out of nothing. The idea of the annihilation of so many immense and glorious bodies, organized with inimitable skill, and declarative of infinite wisdom, is gloomy and forbidding. Indeed, it is scarcely credible that God should annihilate any of his works. It ought not to be believed without the most decisive proof. On the other hand, it is a most animating thought, that this visible creation, which sin has marred, which the polluted breath of men and devils has defiled, and which by sin will be reduced to utter ruin, will be restored by our Jesus, will arise from its ruins in tenfold splendour, and shine with more illustrious glory than before it was defaced by sin.

"After a laborious and anxious search on this interesting subject, I must pronounce the latter to be my decided opinion.

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And the same I find has been the more common opinion of the Christian fathers of the times of the Reformation, and of the writers and annotators who have since flourished. I could produce on this side a catalogue of names, which would convince you that this has certainly been the common opinion of the Christian church in every age, as it was also of the Jewish.

"The words which are employed to express the destruction of the world do not necessarily imply annihilation. Is it said that the world shall perish? The same word is used to express the ancient destruction of the world by the flood, when certainly it was not annihilated. Is it said that the world shall have an end and be no more? This may be understood only of the present form and organization of the visible system. Is it said that the heavens and the earth shall be dissolved by fire? But the natural power of fire is not to annihilate, but only to dissolve the composition and change the form of substances."

JOHN KNOX says:—

"Has not the Lord Jesus, in despite of Satan's malice, carried up our flesh into heaven? And shall he not return? We know that he shall return, and that with expedition." "What were this else but to reform the face of the whole earth, which never was, nor yet shall be, till that righteous King and Judge appear for the restoration of all things."

DR. MATHER of Boston says:—

"The seventh trumpet will sound ere long; and then there will be voices in heaven saying: 'The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ.' He will then remove his throne from heaven to this visible world. Then will his visible kingdom appear in the greatest glory; when, also, there will be a personal reign and residence of Christ in this lower world."

"The servants of Christ ought not to have a servile fear of the great day of judgment, but rather to pray and long for it. Should they not long for the coming of Christ? Is it not the spirit and character of a true believer to do so? Does not the Song of Songs, which is Solomon's, conclude with these words: 'Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like to a roe or to a young hart on the mountains of spices?' And does not the blessed Book of God conclude with like fervent desires? 'The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.' But Christ will not come personally to preside over the earth before the day of judgment, which is often in the Scripture called his coming."

"When they that corrupt the earth are destroyed, a new earth will succeed, in which shall dwell righteousness. Then will the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

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JOHN BUNYAN says:—

"None ever saw this world as it was in its first creation, but Adam and his wife, neither will any see it, until the manifestation of the children of God; that is, until the redemption or resurrection of the saints. But then it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Adam, therefore, as a type of Christ, reigned in the church almost a thousand years. The world, therefore, beginning thus, doth show us how it will end, viz., by the reign of the second Adam, as it began with the reign of the first. These long-lived men, therefore, show us the glory that the church shall have in the latter day, even in the seven-thousandth year of the world, that Sabbath when Christ shall set up his kingdom on earth. According to that which is written: 'They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.' . . . . . Hence, therefore, in the first place, the dragon is chained for these thousand years."

The REV. JOHN GILL, D.D., says:—

"We Christians 'look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,' righteous persons, and they only, 2 Pet. iii. 13. The things to be inquired into are, what these new heavens and earth be, and who the inhabitants of them?

"I. What are meant by the new heavens and the new earth, in the above passages? These are to be understood not in a figurative, but in a literal sense. 1. Not in a figurative sense, as of the Gospel church state; Peter could never speak of the new heavens and new earth in this sense as future. The Gospel church state, even in the first and purest ages of it, was not perfect as the state of things will be; but in the new heavens and the new earth none but such as are perfectly righteous will dwell in the New Jerusalem state; there will be no temple, no worship in the manner that now is. Nor is it to be understood of the state of the Jews at the time of their conversion. This will be before the new heavens and new earth are formed, Rev. xix. 7, 8. Nor of the spiritual reign of Christ, which will be in the present earth, and not in the new one. Nor of the heavenly state or the ultimate glory; for these new heavens and earth are distinct from the third heaven, the seat of that. The camp of the saints, and the holy and beloved city, are represented as on earth, even at the end of a thousand years, Rev. xx. 9. 2. The new heavens and new earth are to be understood in a literal sense; a literal sense is not to be departed from without necessity; the phrase 'heaven and earth,' is used by the apostle Peter frequently, and always literally in the sublunary world; by the new ones can be meant no other. 1. The new heavens must be interpreted of the airy heavens and of a new air in them; purged, purified, and refined by fire; no storms of hail, no stores of snow, no blustering

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storms and tempests, no convulsions and flashes of lightning, nor peals of thunder: but a pure, serene, and tranquil air, quite suited to the bodies of raised saints: the pure air will now be cleared of devils, the whole body of them will be cast into the abyss. 2. The new earth will be an earth refined and renewed, and restored to its paradisiacal estate, as it was before the fall. It shall no more bring forth thorns and thistles, nor require labour and pains to cultivate it. It must be but reasonable, that since Christ hath redeemed his people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, that every degree of that curse should be removed: which, as yet, is not from the earth particularly: when the second Adam and his seed come to enjoy the earth alone, accordingly, 'there will be no more curse,' Rev. xxii. 3.

"II. The inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth are next to be considered. These are described: 1. By the name of 'righteousness' itself; 'wherein,' in the new heavens and earth 'dwelleth righteousness,' 2 Pet. iii. 13; that is, righteous persons; see Isaiah lx. 21. 'Thy people shall be all righteous, they shall inherit the land for ever,' Psalm xxxvii. 29. The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein for ever. 2. The inhabitants of which are the palm-bearing company in Rev. vii. 9; for this vision is synchronal, or cotemporary, with that of the new heavens and the new earth. These are the persons, and this will be the happy case of the inhabitants of the new heavens and the new earth."

"Christ will have a special, peculiar, glorious and visible kingdom, in which he will reign personally on earth. 1. I call it a special, peculiar kingdom, different from the kingdom of nature, and from his spiritual kingdom. 2. It will be very glorious and visible; hence his appearing and kingdom are put together, 2 Tim. iv. 1. 3. This kingdom will be, after all the enemies of Christ and of his people are removed out of the way. Antichrist will be destroyed; an angel, who is no other than Christ, will then personally descend to bind Satan and all his angels. 4. This kingdom of Christ will be bounded by two resurrections: by the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the just; and by the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, at which it will end, or nearly."

The Rev. J. Watts (of Genesee, N. Y.) says:—

"The doctrine that the earth will not be annihilated by the general conflagration, but purified and restored to its pristine beauty and glory, and become the everlasting abode of the saints, cannot fail to intensely interest every reflecting mind. There is inspiration in the thought that the ultimate and eternal abode of the saints will not be a land of 'dimness and mystery beyond all comprehension,' but 'that *there* will be beauty to delight the eye, and music to regale the ear, and the comforts that spring

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from all the charitiesof intercourse between man and man, holding converse as they now do on earth, and gladdening each other with the benignant smiles that play on the human countenance, or the accents of kindness that fall in soft and soothing melody from the human voice;' that the earth, instead of being annihilated by the conflagration that awaits it, will be, by Him, who called it into being in the beginning—

> ——— 'renewed, improved,
> With fertile vale and wood of fertile bough,
> And streams of milk and honey, flowing song,
> And mountains tinctured with perpetual green;
> In clime and season, fruitful as at first,
> When Adam woke, unfallen, in Paradise.
> And God shall from the fount of native light
> A handful take of beams and clothe the sun
> Again in glory; and send forth the moon
> To borrow thence her wonted rays and lead
> Her stars, the virgin daughters of the sky.'"

The Rev. James Bonar, of Greenock, says:—

"Men dream that the world is to be renovated with all the gentleness of spring, when it loosens the fetters of winter by a break. But Chalmers had studied the word more accurately when he wrote, 'Of this I am satisfied, that the next coming will be a coming, not to the final judgment, but a coming to usher in the millennium. I utterly despair of the universal prevalence of Christianity as the result of a missionary process. But without slackening our obligations to help forward the great cause, I look for its conclusive establishment through a widening passage of desolations and judgments, with the utter demolition of our present civil and ecclesiastical structures.' Yes, beloved, 'Overturn! overturn! overturn!' is the watchword of our approaching Lord; and now that we feel the ground heaving beneath us, ought we not the more confidently to *expect*, the more eagerly to *hope for*, Him who, instead of man's balance of power, set aside for ever, will stretch over the nations the sceptre of righteousness, and reign as Prince of Peace."

The Rev. Patrick Fairbairn says:—

"Man's original inheritance was a lordship or dominion stretching over the whole earth. . . When he fell, he fell from his dominion, as well as from purity: the inheritance departed from him. . . What can the redemption of the inheritance be but the rescuing of this earth from the manifold ills which through the instrumentality of Satan have come to lodge in its bosom—purging its elements of all mischief and disorder—changing it from being the vale of tears and charnel-house of death, into a paradise of life and blessing—restoring to man, himself then redeemed and fitted for the honour, the sceptre of a real domi-

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mion over all its fulness—in a word, rendering it in character and design what it was on creation's morn, when the sons of God shouted for joy."

The Rev. Dr. McNeile says:—

"The second advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" is "copiously spoken of in the Holy Scriptures. And no wonder; for it is the crowning subject of all, towards which every intermediate subject tends. It is the final chorus, in which all the harmony of prophecy combines. It is the ocean into which all the streams of Revelation empty themselves as their great home. Sin and misery till he comes; righteousness and happiness at his coming. Groanings and agony till he comes; songs of triumph at his coming! Faint glimmerings of hope, amidst surrounding and prevailing darkness, and desolation, and despair, till he comes; everlasting light, and life, and joy, and love, at his coming! These are the cadences which continually fall upon our ear from the sacred harp."—*Sermons on the Advent*, p. 100.

"This fallen world! . . . Must it continue so for ever? Shall the vessel so marred on the wheel be never remade by the hand of the potter? Hearken to the glorious answer which the Holy Ghost has given to this question: the creation itself, also, shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. (Rom. viii. 21.) Yes, there shall be deliverance at the coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'whom the heavens must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began,' Acts iii. 21. Then, bondage shall be no more, but liberty. Corruption shall be no more, but glory. The curse shall be no more, but blessing.

"The Lord shall make all things new; a new earth, new animals, new fruits, the creation new, so that God, again beholding the work of his own hands, shall say, It is very good!

"A new earth! 'We,' saith the apostle, 'according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness,' 2 Pet. iii. 13. But shall not this earth be destroyed by fire? Yes, as truly as it was of old by water: the apostle gives the parallel. It is a fire, not to annihilate, but to purify; and out of it shall arise the new earth, the abode of everlasting righteousness, according to the promise of the Blessed God."—*Sermons on the Advent*, p. 107.

The Hon. and Rev. Gerard T. Noel writes:—

"Is the vindication of the moral government of God, by the destruction of the world, the real statement of Revelation? Has God indeed declared that this material earth shall be a memorial of wrath, but not of mercy? Is it the recorded purpose of His immutable will that the *scene* and *place* of redemption shall be separated from the *people* to be redeemed? That the earth, with

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all its variety of garniture and beauty, once fitted to be the birthplace of their happiness, and given to them as the patrimony and sovereignty of their race, shall be torn away from their possession, and given up to the avenging flame? Is it indeed the verdict of Revelation, that this earth, on which the Redeemer walked and communed with men, in the hour of his humiliation, shall never be the scene of his fellowship with them in the day of his power and glory? Did he 'as a wayfaring man tarry with them only for a night,' and ascend but to return, in the vengeance of insulted Majesty, to annihilate the scene on which he endured this dishonour?'

"The conviction has fastened strongly upon my mind that the honour of our Blessed Lord and Master is connected, in a peculiar manner, with this renovation of the earth. Here he endured shame, and here Satan has reigned. But the *crown* belongs to *Christ*, and the *kingdom* shall be *his*. To this fact, surely, all the prophecies of the Old Testament direct our views; and every delineation of happiness which lies depicted upon the page of the New Testament borrows all its imagery, and derives all its locality from the *earth* on which we dwell. Every blessing indeed originates with God, and is dependent upon a *spiritual* energy, but the scene on which it operates is this material world. These blessings concentrate their mighty influences to overthrow idolatry, superstition, misrule, sin, and death. They are connected with the *kingly power* of *Christ*. They assure us of his conquest, and invite the *earth* to rejoice before her God. The city 'built of God,' and anticipated by those 'who have died in faith,' 'comes down *from heaven*,' and expands its splendour upon the scenery of earth. The closing pages of Revelation replace, indeed, our exiled feet in the same Paradise from which Adam had been driven forth a wanderer and a criminal. I would venture, in fine, to ask with confidence, whether any other felicity than the unbroken dominion and blessed presence of Christ upon the *earth* be recorded as a source of expectation amidst the prophetic pages of Scripture?'

The Rev. Mr. Birks writes:—

"The scene of the martyrs' sufferings shall witness their exaltation. They who have been rejected outcasts in a world of rebels shall be crowned with honour and dominion over a world redeemed from the fall. The glorious equity of God shall thus be no less conspicuous than the triumph of his grace; and men and angels shall join in that adoring song: 'Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: *just* and *true* are thy ways, O thou King of Saints!'"

The Rev. Alexander Dallas says:—

"The history of this world's life, so far as we are informed of it, is just as a week—7000 years, which is as a mere speck in

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its whole existence. Before Adam was, there was an eternity, during which the world was not; and after the period to which we are brought at the end of the Book of the Revelation there will be an eternity, during which the world *will be*; for God has distinctly declared that he has made the world to be inhabited."

"In order to restore the world exactly to what God made it, to what we find it in the second chapter of Genesis, and to make it what it shall be found millions of years hence—inhabited by the children of Adam, good men, very good, as he made their father and granted to man the sovereignty over his works—it pleased him to pay an enormous price; he gave his own Son to save the world and to restore all things on the earth."

The REV. E. HOARE writes:—

"At Christ's advent, all conditions of the eternal covenant will be fulfilled, and all the work to which he was anointed amply performed. There will not remain one of his elect ungathered, nor a single spot on the garment of any one of them, when he presents them spotless and unblameable before the throne. Throughout the world will there be found no rebel thoughts, for the 'new heavens and the new earth' shall be filled with righteousness; there shall be no injustice, no support of sin, no strife and backbitings; 'nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' There shall be no more blood-stained battle-fields, nor any broken-hearted widows, for the whole world shall rest under the holy sovereignty of the Prince of Peace."

THE END.

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